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TOWNHEAD.

BY

C. LAROM,

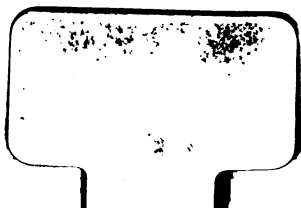


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TOWNHEAD.

The History of the Baptist Church,

ASSEMBLING IN

TOWNHEAD STREET, SHEFFIELD,

FROM ITS COMMENCEMENT TO THE CLOSE OF ITS THIRD
PASTORATE.

BY CHARLES LAROM.

"Consider her palaces, that ye may tell it to the generation following."

48 Psal., 13 verse.

SHEFFIELD :

LEADER & SONS, PRINTERS, 10, BANK STREET.

1870.



TOWNHEAD.

THE verse from which we have placed a few words upon our title page, seems to intimate that church history may, perhaps should, be written ; since that, though not the only method, is the best by which it can be told to the coming generation. It intimates again that in each generation there will be lovers of the Saviour, who will eagerly enquire about His past affairs in this world ; that on every successive mighty wave of human population, the Vessel of the Church will be seen, like the ship upon the sea of Galilee, with Christ in it, and faithful ones about Him, trusting Him, calling upon Him in peril, adoring Him for deliverance, saying with astonishment, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him ?" knowing Him to be the Lord ; who will take deep interest in learning how the vessel sped before the great Captain of Salvation took *them* on board from sinking in the deep, what rocks were seen a-head, what storms beat on the vessel, and how those storms gave way for sunny skies and easy sail-

ing on the bosom of the quiet sea, and what peaceful high communion there was then on board? The verse suggests, moreover, that replies to such enquiries should not be partial or one-sided, but accurate and full. Hence the writer of Church history is to acquaint himself thoroughly with his theme. He is to "walk about Zion," to "go round about her," to "tell the towers thereof," to "mark well her bulwarks," to "consider her palaces." Had Milner and Mosheim, and other great writers of Church history, more fully complied with these directions, their volumes, though now much valued by the Christian Church, had been worthy a far higher appreciation. We profess no such ability as those writers possessed, nor do we attempt their task. We consider one only of Zion's communities. The individual Churches of Christ may be called The Palaces of the Christian Zion. "God is known in these palaces for a refuge." Each Church is a living temple—a "spiritual house," and is declared to be "for an habitation of God through the Spirit." We adventure a narrative of one of these.

We write this history in compliance with the request of friends. We purpose to do so with the endeavour to avoid dryness and prolixity, and with the hope that the record may be profitable, and not otherwise than pleasing to those who take a due interest in the affairs of God's kingdom in the world.

Had the design been to write of the Baptist *denomination* in Sheffield, then this history must have been enlarged to take in accounts of the two other Baptist Churches in the town—that one assembling in Portmahon, and that in Cemetery road—for both which Churches we cherish sincere Christian regard. The narrative must also have begun earlier, for we find from documents handed us by a friend, that a few pious individuals were formed into a Baptist Church in the year 1786, and met together for divine worship in a hired room in Milk street. During their continuance as a Church about fifty persons were baptized by ministers who were invited for that purpose. These were the Revds. Hopper, from Nottingham ; Taylor, from Birmingham ; Ashforth, from Gildersome ; and Hindle, from Halifax. But the effort failed of success, and the account of it concludes thus :—“ The Baptist Church being composed of poor people only, and but few in all, and labouring under many and great difficulties, and not being able to carry on divine worship creditably, gave up public preaching in September, 1793, having struggled with troubles more than seven years, and never having a pastor ordained over it.” These poor people may be thought to have been imprudent in entering upon, to them, so expensive an effort ; yet we would not otherwise than admire their zeal in thus endeavouring practically to sustain their views of Church constitution, and the ordinances of

the Saviour, wishing only they had had grace and energy enough to carry out their purpose to its completion.

The Particular Baptist Church of Jesus Christ, assembling in Townhead chapel, was formed in the year one thousand eight hundred and four, at a period therefore when persecution for conscience sake in this country was dying out, and when the great religious movements for the advancement of Christianity in the world, that have distinguished the present century, were starting into being—movements that have been of immense service to the kingdom of God, and in which, as its history will show, this Church has, with more or less of continued zeal, co-operated.

Twelve persons, of whom two only were women, gave themselves to each other in solemn covenant and Christian fellowship, to wait regularly upon God in public worship, to aid in the extension of His kingdom among men, and to live in obedience to the ordinances and laws of Christ. Their names were : Isaac Senior, William Downs, John Bright, William Bright, James Crawshaw, Samuel Lawrence, Sarah Newton, William Heald, Frances Heald, Joseph Drabble, Edward Periggo, Thomas Taylor. With a view to this arrangement, these persons had been dismissed from a small Baptist Church at Masborough, a village six miles distant, of which Church they had been members, going thither once a month to com-

mune at the Lord's table, and at other times worshipping with Churches in their own town of other denominations, all whose consistent members they loved for Christ's sake. But now, without animosity to any, they were concerned to have in Sheffield a Christian Church, formed fully, in their view, on the plan and principles of the gospel, and so they constituted themselves into such a community with much prayer and meekness, and in the fear of God. Their doctrinal views, expressed in their Church book, in which they inserted their names, being those of moderate Calvinism; and the positive institutions of Christ being, in their view, chiefly two—baptism and the Lord's supper: the former capable of being administered by immersion only; and neither of them to be given to any but those who make a credible profession of faith in the divine Saviour. They found among themselves a pastor in the person of William Downs, who was adapted to their then present circumstances, and who was unanimously chosen to the pastoral office. Mr. Downs was ordained in 1805. Shortly after this, Isaac Senior, John Bright, William Bright and Richard Atkinson were constituted deacons. This was a small beginning that some might be disposed to despise, yet in number the little Church was equal to the company which first celebrated, and that under His own immediate presidency, the sacred memorial service of the Redeemer's death. These people hoped by their Chris-

tian union to honour their divine Lord, and obtain spiritual benefit for themselves and others ; and from that day of small things the Church has continued and increased till now, being blessed, and made a blessing.

About the year 1814 five youths, who were companions, in the congregation, appeared to have been brought under the power of true religion nearly at the same time. These were subsequently baptized and received to membership ; shortly after which, being concerned to be useful in the service of Christ, they proposed to commence a Sunday school in the vestry of the chapel. The movement met with some opposition from friends of the place, who were not quite sure as to the motives which induced it, or as to the fitness of the effort itself on the sacred day : a Sunday school being then a comparatively new institution. The opposition was at length overcome and a school commenced, which by God's blessing has been of high advantage to many teachers, to many scholars, and to the church, which has found in it beneficial occupation for its members, and whose increase of members has been continuously aided by its means. Of the five youths mentioned, two soon died, resting their hope upon the Saviour : the other three have held office in the Church, which they have desired faithfully to serve, and they are happily connected with it to the present time. A little while previous to their baptism Mr. Underhill, then pastor

of a Baptist Church at Broomsgrove, visited Sheffield to solicit pecuniary contributions for the removal of debt upon his place of worship. He seeing the poor accommodations in which the friends here assembled, advised them earnestly to build, and so influenced them that they commenced the effort, which issued in the erection of Townhead street Chapel. Part of the freehold ground for the building was given by Mr. Whittington Sowter; the other part was found purchasable at a moderate price, and thus the site was determined on. The Chapel was opened for divine service on the 20th of April, 1814, when sermons were preached, one by the Rev. William Steadman, of Bradford; the other by the Rev. William Stephens, of Manchester; into which chapel the church and congregation removed from their small rented place in Coalpit lane, called now Cambridge street.

Mr. Isaac Senior, one of the original members, and also a deacon of the Church, died on the 7th of May, 1806, "furnishing," the Church book says, "a striking proof of the sufficiency of religion to support the mind in death." He left in the hands of a business firm two hundred pounds, to aid in the erection of a chapel, the interest at five per cent. to go, in the meantime, towards the support of the pastor; but the firm presently failed, and the whole of the money was lost. Another friend was, how-

ever, raised up to help, in the person of Mr. William Bowman. He was previously inclined to Baptist views, and came the first time among the Baptists to hear the funeral sermon for Mr. Senior. He remained with them; and gave towards the new Chapel, at different times, the ultimate sum of six hundred pounds. His wife, Mrs. Bowman, was baptized, and continued many years an honoured member of the Church, dying at a great age in March, 1848, repeating in her closing moments the words of the Apostle—"Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed." Mr. Bowman never became a member, in consequence perhaps, in part, of the feebleness of his health: but during his last long affliction he gave pleasing hope that he was a truly converted man, and that he is now safe among the ransomed.

When it was concluded to build, and the immediate friends had contributed towards the erection what they then could, Mr. Downs waited upon persons of other denominations in the town, soliciting their pecuniary aid. One of them, when the purpose of the call was named, said: "Well, I will give thee five pounds; but depend upon it, when they have got a new chapel they will want a new parson." This was kindly said, but it proved true. Mr. Downs resigned his charge about seventeen months after the Chapel was opened, and accepted the pastorate of a Baptist Church at Truro, in Cornwall. Mr. Downs

was a very worthy man, in humble circumstances, with little or no educational training ; working at his trade in support of himself and his family for some time after his acceptance of the pastoral charge, until at length the Church was able to relieve him of that necessity, so that he could give his whole time to study and to other parts of his sacred work. He was a man of a meek and quiet spirit, of unblemished reputation, with sound though limited views of divine truth : he had a rather pleasing appearance in the pulpit, with a natural delivery in speaking, and by the blessing of God was not without considerable success.

Mr. Downs was succeeded by Mr. John Jones, a respectable young man, a native of Wales, who had passed through a training for the Christian ministry at Bristol College, and who came thence direct to Sheffield. His ordination took place on the Twenty-first of August, 1816 ; when the Rev. Moses Fisher, of Liverpool, described the nature of a gospel church, asked the usual questions, and received Mr. Jones' confession of faith. The Rev. Isaiah Birt, of Birmingham, prayed the ordination prayer, and gave the charge to the minister ; and the Rev. William Steadman preached to the people. Much expectation was formed of Mr. Jones' usefulness in his new sphere ; and of hope that the Church in its new Chapel, with its new minister, would greatly prosper. But the

earnest hope was not realized. The failure being possibly occasioned rather by Mr. Jones' Welsh accent and laboured utterance, than by a deficiency of holy zeal and love. At the close of five years' service he resigned his work at Sheffield, and took the oversight of a distant church.

We have reached now the year in which the third pastorate of this Church begun, and we propose to consider its history henceforth in decades, or periods of ten years each, as that may give to the narrative more distinctness.

FIRST DECADE.

It may be regretted that this account must be very general—must refer for the most part to external matters rather than to those which, of a Christian Church, constitute the principal, that is, the inner glory. The most precious part of a Church's history is that which recounts the enlightenment of human minds, the deep penitence of awakened sinners, the divine drawing of human hearts to the Saviour, the gushing of holy joy from the hope of divine forgiveness, the spiritual improvement of the human character, the holy fellowship of saints, their humble and happy communion with God, the strengthening of Christ's followers to combat with labours, sorrows, temptations, and finally to meet the last enemy with fortitude and the calm loving joy of faith. By divine mercy all these things took place in the Church whose history we give, but we shall not be able to tell of them in detail. They are, moreover, high and sacred things, which the true children of God can better understand, than we can, with brevity, describe. The

full history of a Christian Church includes, moreover, the minister's experiences, his cares and labours, joys and sorrows, successes and failures, his songs and tears, the bowing down of his spirit at the thought of his unworthiness, and at sight of his great responsibilities, and the lifting up of his heart when he could get that heart to be "fixed, trusting in the Lord." But these pastoral experiences will not have a lengthened memorial here; it would not be well to write it; the flock that was cared for could not fully sympathise with it; it need not be here inscribed; its witness is in heaven, and "its record is on high:" may that witness be the considerate and sympathising Saviour, and that record be written by his own kind hand "to the praise of the glory of His grace."

The third pastor of this Church was Charles Larom, the writer of this narrative, who feels the writing of it will be less easy to him, since he will have frequent occasion to refer in it to himself. It will somewhat relieve that feeling to say that the retrospect furnished by this history occasions a deep conviction of his need of self abasement before God, and of glorying only in the Lord.

He was born in London, but was transferred for apprenticeship in business to Sheffield. He was one of the five youths previously mentioned as being baptized, and as having originated the Sunday-school. Soon after this he felt a strong yearning of heart to-

wards the Christian ministry, which becoming known to his friends, he was requested to preach three times before the Church, that judgment might be formed as to his ability. After this he was unanimously and affectionately advised by the Church to exercise his gifts, and endeavour to improve them by preaching the gospel as opportunities might offer. This was in August, 1815. During the year following he preached forty times in the town and adjacent villages; after which, being duly recommended by the Church, he was received into the College of the Northern Baptist Education Society, then at Bradford, Yorkshire, under the presidency of the Rev. W. Steadman. The four years he spent at Bradford were the four most laborious, pleasant, and important years then, of his life. The college studies were gratifying to his taste. The work he contemplated appeared to him the only work worth living for, while the mental power, the sound theology, the transparent holiness, and the burning zeal of the beloved president, made upon his heart a sacred and blessed impression, which nor time, nor subsequent associations have been able to remove. The lectures of the president, weekly, on Divinity and Church history, were invaluable to him; and the annual sermon to the students, preached, during his stay there, by Birt, of Birmingham; Kinghorn, of Norwich; Robert Hall, of Leicester; and Anderson, of Edinburgh, he remembers, even now,

with benefit and pleasure. Towards the close of his college course he received three several invitations to the pastoral charge ; one from a Church in the county of Durham, another from a Church in the north of Yorkshire, and a third from a Church in the city itself, of York. This last invitation he accepted.

His college course having terminated, he had gone on a visit to friends at Sheffield and Loughborough, purposing to enter, in a few weeks, upon his work at York. But while at Sheffield, a letter from his late tutor informed him that events had occurred at York, principally the removal from the Church there of its chief pecuniary supporter, which would make it impossible for him to adhere to his engagement. He was surprised, grieved, and disappointed ; and was obliged to signify, with regret, to the Church at York, that its altered condition made it his duty to withdraw from serving it. The friends at York were much hurt ; but the conclusion, though painful, was inevitable.

Thus, while at Sheffield, he was left unexpectedly without an engagement. The Church at Sheffield hearing of this, and being at the time without a minister, requested him to stay a few weeks and supply its pulpit. He did so until three months had passed, when he was urged to stay three months longer. He hesitated, yet remained, until, at the end of twelve months, he accepted an affectionate and unanimous

invitation to become the pastor. It may seem strange that this was not done sooner; but he had been known to some in the congregation from his boyhood, and feared that might stand in the way of his usefulness; then there was much lack of Christian unity amongst the members of the Church; there was a heavy debt upon the chapel; the congregations were very small; the denomination but little known or respected in the town; and the amount of salary offered to begin with was only eighty pounds. His hesitation, therefore, to accept the pastorate is accounted for. On the other hand he saw it to be a station of importance, in a comparatively large population, in the centre of an extensive district, without a single Baptist Church, save the small one at Masbro'. Divine Providence seemed to have marked it out as his field of labour. He yielded to the intimation, and was ordained on the 16th of May, 1821. The Rev. W. Stephens, of Rochdale, asked the questions and received C. Larom's confession of faith. The Rev. William Steadman, of Bradford, gave the charge to the young minister from 6 c. Ephesians, 20 v.; and the sermon to the church was preached by the Rev. T. Morgan, of Birmingham. And now the youthful pastor felt that he had before him a great work. He had humbly engaged to throw into it his whole soul. He had now to meet that pledge, and, by divine help, to raise the feeble Church to comfort and enlargement.

There were three requisites to this. The reduction at once, and the removal entirely at length of debt from the Chapel; the reunion of the Church members in Christian love; and good preaching. The first was attempted, partly in a way then common, by asking the aid of other Christians. The pastor felt it a self-denial to do that, but he did it, inasmuch as it was for the Redeemer's cause. The case had been previously presented to the Christian public in Sheffield, and had been kindly responded to. He now presented it again, and collected near ninety pounds: he carried the appeal to London, and brought home eighty pounds clear; in the north of Yorkshire he collected fifty-eight pounds; at Bristol and its neighbourhood, twenty-three pounds; and at Birmingham, thirty-five pounds; in all, two hundred and eighty-six pounds. This sum gave great relief, being connected with further contributions by the friends occupying the chapel, so that the immediate pressure of the debt was removed. The second requirement to success was harmony in the Church. This was sought by occasional sermons on the duty of Christian forgiveness, and by a kind exposition of, and a firm adherence to the law of Christ respecting offences given in 18 c. Math., 15—17 verses, the pastor carefully avoiding to be a party man. The third and greatest necessity was good preaching; no trifling requirement of one with small experience and

fresh from college. But it was earnestly endeavoured after, by much reading, much study, much careful writing, for about fifteen years, of two sermons weekly; much consideration of the best models of preaching, apart from the servile imitation of any; and much prayer.

From his first attempt, a year before he went to college, he had kept a record of his preaching, the number of his sermons, the place where preached, the time when, from what text, with a column for memorandums; which record will be of use in drawing up this narrative, furnishing items which may serve to correct the mistakes of some in relation to a minister's work.

The Independent ministers of Sheffield had been in the habit of taking tea together on the first Monday in each month, for fraternal conference; then, in the evening, they with their people held a united missionary prayer meeting in each chapel in rotation. They respectfully invited us to join them, which we did. This brought the denomination more fully before the town, and was of service to us. Cheering to the youthful pastor, and profitable was his intercourse with the ministers; while the union of the different congregations, in the evening service, was conducive to Christian love, and brought before the minds of the people the great mission work in a way suggestive that it was work for all, and work

that needed for its success the prayerfully sought co-operation of God. This fraternal meeting continued through many years.

On Wednesday and Thursday, the 9th and 10th of June, 1824, the Yorkshire and Lancashire Association of Baptist Churches held its annual meetings in Townhead street. Twelve ministers, besides many delegates, were present. The Revs. John Jackson, William Steadman, James Lister, and Isaac Mann preached. On the 15th of May, 1825, the Rev. Robert Hall, M.A., of Leicester, preached in our chapel; he being then the first preacher of the age. We had crowded congregations, and a collection for the Baptist mission amounting to forty pounds.

On the 15th of October, 1825, an event took place of considerable importance to the Church, being sure to tell much for good or evil upon its history. This was the marriage of the pastor to Miss Harriet Gouldthorp, a young lady, remarkably amiable in person and character; the oldest daughter of a respectable family in the congregation, and for some time a member of the Church. In the account of her conversion to God, given at a Church meeting, she referred to a sermon preached by the pastor, a year before, from 3 c. John, 16 verse, as powerfully influencing her consecration to the Saviour. He recollected that sermon as one which, notwithstanding the beauty and grandeur of the theme, he had de-

livered with much embarrassment; and, therefore, with little subsequent expectation of its doing any good. Yet that sermon, he thought so little of, was made by divine goodness subservient to the spiritual benefit of one with whom he was afterwards brought into so dear and happy a relationship. This fact made more sacred the union which was founded in pure and mutual love, and which was highly approved by all with whom we were connected.

On the 14th of November, 1826, the pastor preached a sermon on dissent, at the ordination of Mr. Nott, at Sutton-in-Ashfield.

In March, 1827, Dr. Marsham, from Serampore, East Indies, one of our first missionaries, visited us, took tea in our schoolroom, and gave an account of the mission. A presentation was made to him as a token of esteem, and an expression of our valuation of the work of missions abroad. It consisted of a handsome set of table cutlery, ivory handles, with dessert knives and forks to match; a pair of excellent razors, some pen knives, and scissors. The same number of articles, of the same kind and value, were handed to Dr. Marshman, for his colleague, Dr. Carey. In the course of the evening, James Montgomery, Esq., the Sheffield poet and philanthropist, presented to the Dr. a set of his works for the Serampore Baptist College. Mr. Briggs gave Luther's Commentary on Galatians; and Mr. Showel, another of

our members, a case of mathematical instruments for the same institution.

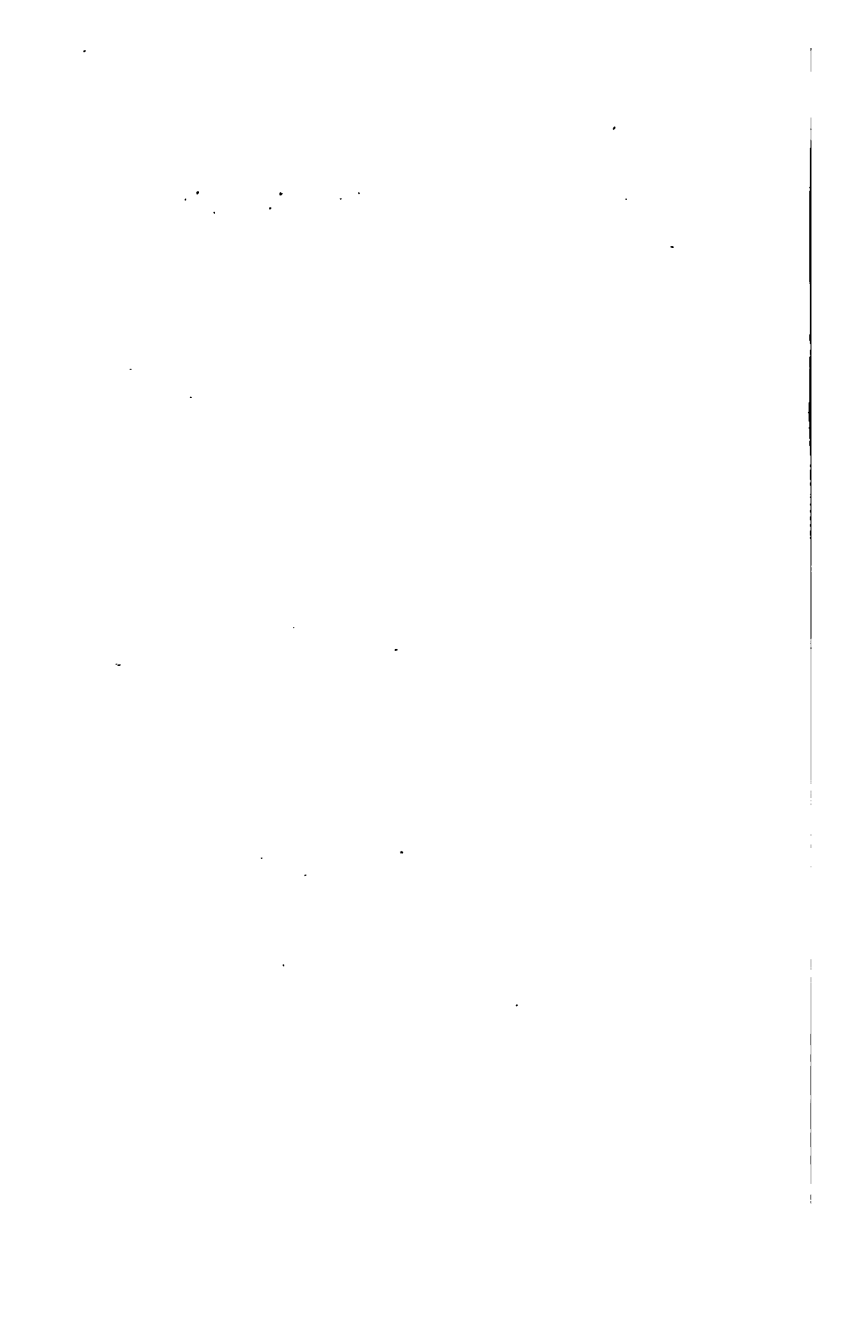
On the 15th of June, 1828, the pastor, delivered an address, to the members of the Particular Baptist Church, at Loughborough, at the ordination of the Rev. Isaac New. Mr. New was a youthful member of our Church, was called to the ministry of the gospel, recommended to Bradford College, and entered in 1824. After four years of study there he took charge of the Church at Loughborough. He has been, for some years, a useful and highly-esteemed minister of a Church at Melbourne, in Australia. He resigned that work, on account of increasing years, in 1858, and retired on an annuity voluntarily guaranteed by his people, of two hundred and fifty pounds. On the seventh of November, 1830, six persons were baptised, of whom one was the Rev. David Clark, who himself preached the sermon on Baptism. Mr. Clark was a very excellent man, a gentleman of fortune, and had, for some years, served, as its pastor, the Independent Church at Dronfield, at which place he lived. His views of baptism having changed, he was baptised at his own request on this occasion. He continued his ministrations to the Independent Church until he died, universally respected, on the twenty-sixth of December, 1848. We have reached now the close of our first decade, bringing the history down to the end of 1830, our number of members being 137, the num-

ber of sermons preached by the pastor 2891, who, in addition to services at home, had preached at Winco-bank, Richmond, Chesterfield, Birmingham, London, Loughboro', Coventry, Scarboro', Barnsley, Accring-ton, Bolton, Bakewell, Retford, Newcastle, Hamsterly, Bradford, Shipley, Trowbridge, Bristol, Leicester, Thurlston, Sutton, Swanwick, Bawtry, Tickhill, Hali-fax, Nottingham, Stockport, and Manchester. The Church passed through the years of this period in peace and love; losing many members by death and other causes of removal, but gaining others and earnestly desiring more extensive usefulness and blessing, being often favoured, though unworthy, with seasons of divine sunlight in the general worship of God, in the sweet fellowship of saints, in commemorating the great mystery of love at the Lord's table, in the reception of new converts to Christ, and in the thought that we were united to make efforts for the Saviour's glory, for our own spiritual and eternal wellbeing, and that of others. Our song was :

We are a garden, walled around,
Chosen, and made peculiar ground;
A little spot enclosed by grace,
Out of the world's wide wilderness :

and our prayer was :

Awake ! O heavenly wind, and come,
Blow on this garden of perfume.
* Spirit divine, descend and breathe
A gracious gale on plants beneath.



SECOND DECADE.

The first year of this period opened with the pastor's preaching a course of Sunday evening lectures, on the History of Joseph. These were afterwards printed in a small volume of near two hundred pages. The book was well received, and the edition was presently sold.

In January, 1881, Mr. John Wheatley and Mr. William Atkinson, who were two of the five youths mentioned near the beginning of this history, were chosen by the Church to be deacons, which office they still honourably sustain.

On the 7th of April, the pastor preached to the Church in Chesterfield, at the ordination of Mr. Stokes. The Rev. C. Stovel delivered the introductory address. The Rev. William Steadman gave the charge. About this time Benniah Hoe, one of our members, a respectable and well-educated young man, was called to the ministry, and was recommended to Bradford College. At the close of his college course he became, in 1885, pastor of the Baptist Church, at Broomsgrove.

On the 25th of October, 1831, the Honourable and Rev. G. H. R. Curzon preached in our chapel,—collection for the Baptist Mission, thirty pounds.

In April, 1832, the pastor collected from friends of other denominations in the town, one hundred guineas towards the cost of our new school-rooms; our own people contributing at the time two hundred pounds, which sums together met the demand.

The Church had hitherto held on its way in harmony and peace; but now the scene was changed and trouble came; trouble in the Church, which was the more distressing, as it was accompanied by a great public calamity: the visitation of the pestilential cholera at Sheffield. As a Church we were mercifully spared a great loss from that fearful scourge, one only of our members being taken away by it; but it raged among the town's people, filled all hearts with dismay, and hurried great numbers out of life. Our pastor preached two sermons relative to the appalling visitation, one in his own pulpit, the other out of doors, in Paradise square. Our great private trouble began thus:

A very popular advocate of a very benevolent object, who had several times asked for, and readily obtained, our pulpit for preaching and collections in aid of his work, had come under suspicion of misappropriating part of the large sums he obtained, and of failure as to sobriety of conduct, so that some of the

best men in our denomination had felt it their duty to withdraw from him their countenance. Under these circumstances the minister of Townhead was applied to for the use of his pulpit as before, but to this he demurred, sharing, with others, the painful suspicion we have named. He was then waited upon by a travelling secretary of the principal applicant, with a menace, that having the people on their side, they would work mischief if the pulpit were refused. This, of course, placed the pastor in a very trying position, between a number of his own people on the one hand, who demanded that the pulpit should be granted; and a sense of duty on the other: for he saw it to be *his* duty rather than that of others to preserve his pulpit from being used by any unsuitable person. After using various methods of conciliation in vain, he called a Church meeting, at which, as mildly and respectfully as possible, he stated his reasons, and negatived the application. Immediately a number of members rose angrily, declared their connexion with the Church had ceased, and went away to devise means of separate communion, which they carried into effect by hiring a room, and commencing in it services of public worship.

This disruption was a sore trial to the pastor, and to the members of the Church who remained, one of whom, who might be styled "a mother in Israel," a worthy widow of a deceased Baptist minister, went

home distressed ; and on entering her house, sat down upon a chair and died. The pastor, moreover, yielding, perhaps, to greater sadness than even the occasion called for, thought that his own heart would have broken also ; but he was borne through the trial by a consciousness that, with prayerful and earnest solicitude, he had done his best, and by the hope that the trouble would be overruled for good. He did not charge the blame of this event on the constitution of our dissenting Churches, which he believed to be very near in likeness to the New Testament model, but to human imperfection, which will sometimes spoil the working of even divine arrangements. It may be added that by the same individual other Churches had been in like manner injured. But, as in nature, the tempest spends itself by its own fury ; so this evil passed away, and the Church recovered its accustomed peace. Yea, even more than that. As the natural day of cloudiness and storm is sooner or later succeeded by a bright and propitious sky, so there awaited us a time of especial refreshing from the presence of the Lord, an account of which shall be presently given. We will first furnish a few memorandums of events connected with the Church, which will be found of sufficient interest to be placed upon these pages.

The 22nd of November, 1832, was appointed a day of general thanksgiving for the removal of the cholera from the town. We had two sermons on the occasion.

On the 9th of September the pastor preached a sermon in the open air at Pitsmoor. Collection, three guineas for our little Sunday school, which we had there several years, and which did much good.

14th FEBRUARY, 1833.—The Rev. Eustace Carey, from Calcutta, and the Rev. Thomas Burchell, from Jamaica, were with us pleading for the mission. Collections, forty-five pounds.

DECEMBER, 1833.—The pastor preached seven Sunday-evening lectures on the Being of God, and the Divine Origin of the Holy Scriptures, to meet the busy infidelity of the time.

13th APRIL, 1834.—He preached a sermon recommendatory of a special pecuniary effort for our mission in Jamaica, which was in great need of help. We raised ninety-three pounds.

In AUGUST, 1834, we celebrated by a sermon and a tea meeting the *Abolition of Slavery* in the British dominions.

4th OCTOBER, 1835.—A sermon to mark the third centenary of the Reformation. Three hundred years since the whole Bible was first printed in the English language.

30th OCTOBER, 1835.—The following resolution was passed at a Church meeting: "That any conscientious pædobaptist of approved character be permitted, if desiring it, to commune with us at the Lord's table; but not, unless baptized, to be received into the membership of the Church."

NOVEMBER, 1835.—Our pastor had been a considerable time much concerned to raise money for the erection of a Baptist chapel in Rotherham, and to obtain a site on which to build it. By the liberal help of other friends, and chiefly by his own people, one of whom gave, in different sums, about one hundred pounds, he obtained, at length, a site, and an encouraging amount towards the cost of the erection.

DECEMBER, 1835.—Our own congregation raised one hundred and thirty pounds towards repairs and improvements in our place of worship.

FEBRUARY, 1836.—The pastor delivered eight Sunday evening lectures on “The Ancient Jewish People.”

MARCH, 1836.—He preached discourses on the Book of the Prophet Jonah. These were printed as eight consecutive papers in the *Revivalist* for 1838.

MARCH, 1836.—The Rev. Eustace Carey, and the Rev. I. Aldis preached in our chapel for the mission. Collections, forty-two pounds.

27th APRIL, 1836.—The corner stone of the Baptist chapel, Westgate, Rotherham, was laid by the Rev. David Clark, of Dronfield; C. Larom gave the address; the Rev. James Hudson concluded the service with prayer.

JULY, 1836.—Our pastor collected, at Manchester, fifty pounds for the Rotherham chapel.

APRIL, 1837.—The new Baptist chapel, at Rother-

ham, was opened for divine worship. On the 6th, sermons were preached by the Rev. Moses Fisher, of Liverpool ; the Rev. S. McAll, of Doncaster ; and the Rev. J. Aldis, of Manchester. On Lord's day, the 9th, by the Rev. C. Larom, Rev. J. Aldis, and the Rev. W. H. Stowell, of Masbro'. On Monday, the 10th, one hundred and sixty persons took tea in the chapel, on a platform placed upon the tops of the pews. The collections for the building fund realised at this opening seventy pounds.

DECEMBER, 1836. — Mr. Chapman, and Mr. Ebenezer Smith, were appointed to be deacons. The pastor preached on the Deacons' Office, from 1st Timothy, 3 c. 13 v.

30th APRIL, 1837.—The pastor preached a funeral sermon on the death of the beloved and honoured William Steadman, D.D., through many years the president and theological tutor of Horton college, Bradford. He also, at the Association meeting, held this year at Halifax, read the circular letter on the History of the Yorkshire and Lancashire Associated Baptist Churches.

About this time there came to our chapel a respectable young person from a distant town. She had taken a sitting opposite the pulpit, below ; a stranger to us all. She was presently observed to be deeply moved during worship, especially under preaching. The pastor being apprised of this, by a friend who sat

in the same pew ; he said, " Speak kindly to her yourself, and if you find what you have noticed is truly religious concern, then bring her into the vestry to me, at the close of some evening service. She was soon introduced ; a beautiful, healthy young person of about twenty years of age. As she looked at the pastor, through a tear which stood in her large lustrous eye, he thought he had never had the great question, " What must I do to be saved ? " put to him with such solemn earnestness before. He told her of Jesus : of his power, and his loving willingness to save every sinful one who looked to him. She was somewhat comforted then, and was dismissed with prayer. She afterwards believed in Christ, and her heart had peace : she desired it, and was baptized, and on the same day, at the Lord's supper, she was received to the membership of the Church. On the first Sunday of the next month, she again communed with us at the Lord's table. On the Thursday following, one of the members, meeting the pastor, said, " Do you know that C. S. is very ill ? " " Ill," he said, " she was well and at chapel on Sunday." " Yes," was the reply, " but she is dangerously ill." It was evening, and he was on his way to preach : he could not go to see her then : he went in the morning, and, entering the shop, said to her uncle, who was behind the counter, " I have called to enquire how C—— is, I am sorry to hear she is unwell." " Sir,"

he said, "C—— is no more." She had died. The case was this ; a balloon had gone up with an aeronaut ; she had gone to see it from an upper window ; had sat unwisely in the draught of that window a considerable time, had taken cold, which brought on brain fever, that terminated in death. Yes, she, who, a few days before, was young and fair, and in health that gave promise of long life, had died. How well it was that she had not stifled her previous convictions of her sin and danger ; and postponed her coming to the Saviour to a future day. The Churches of Christ have frequently to mourn over those who do so. The beauty and the inestimable worth of religion ; the possibility of its attainment, are so clearly shewn to them by the wise and faithful preaching of the truth ; that they dare not determine that they will never have it ; but only, that they will wait a while : not considering that its possession is a present blessing ; that every added postponement is an additional insult to God, since it is a preference of sin to Him ; that every single hesitation makes the first step towards salvation less easy, and less profitable. Yet many seek relief to their consciences by a promise of a future repentance : they would not die as the rejecters of Christ ; they hope for a future opportunity to come to Him ; that the fatal accidents ; the fierce diseases which hurry others out of the world will not surprise them : yet many such are overtaken, sur-

prised, struck down, and lost. Over their great ruin the Church of Jesus has often wept; but her tears for such avail not; her remedy cannot reach them; they have gone beyond it; she would have helped; but they would not: now the help needed is beyond her power. We happily have recorded an opposite case. It is a relief and a refreshing to consider it. C. S. had grieved on account of sin: had believed in Christ, and was therefore safe in death. She, in her baptism to Christ, gave herself to be His servant: He took not merely her service; but herself. She hoped to serve Him in His Church on earth; he took her, we believe, to minister before Him in the Church above. She had begun already to gather towards her the loving regard of the disciples of Jesus here. She passed from them to realize the purer, nobler, more exalted love of angels, and of saints in heaven; and far above all, the fulness of His love by whom she had been redeemed. We think it will not be deemed unfitting that one such narrative as this should find a place in the written history of a Christian Church.

28th JUNE, 1837.—The pastor of Townhead preached the sermon to the Church at Rotherham; at the ordination of the Rev. James Buck, to be its pastor: the Rev. James Acworth, of Leeds, gave the charge to the new minister.

In 1839 a number of our members were dismissed, to be formed into a General Baptist Church. The

General Baptist denomination of Christians differed from our own exclusively on abstruse points of doctrine ; they being Low Arminians ; those of our body, High Calvinists : a difference of view, particularly as to the extent of the atonement, and the doctrine of God's choice of His people, occasioned the Baptists, years ago, to range themselves, and to act apart, under the two denominations of General and Particular : names which, like those of other religious sects, fail clearly to intimate what they are intended to express. Through some years past these diverse views have been modified ; and the difference considerably diminished : so that the two sections of Baptists have come nearer to each other in opinion and in effort. They are found together in the " Baptist Union ;" their ministers exchange pulpits, and even take pastorates, the one of the other : and thoughts have been seriously entertained, and expressed, on each side, for the amalgamation of the two denominations into one. All this has resulted, not from indifference, on either side, to divine truth, but from wider and clearer views of it : from the perception that the middle path supplies, to those that walk in it, a greater amount of truth, than either of the extremes ; while it gives for a larger number of Christ's disciples, a warmer love. The friends who now left us, had come, at different times, from distant Churches ; and had joined us, the only Baptist Church then in Sheffield. When their

own denomination determined to form a Church in the town, they felt it their duty to go and aid the effort. Leaving us with regret, they were cordially dismissed to an enterprise that has so far succeeded well ; and in which we wish them still increasing prosperity.

On the 5th of August, 1840, the pastor of Town-head preached the annual sermon to the students of Horton College.

12th AUGUST, 1840.—He prayed the ordination prayer at the settlement of the Rev. Charles New, of Bramley.

29th OCTOBER, 1840.—It was resolved at a church meeting that candidates for membership be at liberty to make a written or verbal statement of their Christian experience before the Church ; but, to be themselves present when that statement is given.

At the close of this second decade, the number of members was 250. The number of the pastor's sermons 8880 ; and during this period he had preached at Wincobank, Chesterfield, Dronfield, Greenhill, Attercliffe, Barnsley, Salendine Nook, Haworth, Staley Bridge, Rochdale, Greasboro', Retford, Masborough, Birmingham, London, Ilford, Exeter, Leicester, Doncaster, Gleadless, Bradford, Golcar, Manchester, Eccles, Wadsley, Rotherham, Hebden Bridge, Oughtibridge, Bishop Burton, Beverley, Hull, Nottingham, London, Leeds, Burlington, Scarboro', Bramley, Worrall, Horsforth.

We give now an account of our gracious visitation before referred to : we shall do this in quotations from a pamphlet, written about the time ; entitled " The Awakening ; a Memorial of a Year of Revived Religion," by C. Larom. In the month of May, 1839, the deacons and myself were consulting by what means we might advance in our congregation, the work of God. We had before us the names of twenty-one persons, of whom we had hope that they had experienced the power of religion. It was proposed that these should be visited ; and with kindness and faithfulness be urged to an avowal of their faith in Christ, in order to their full fellowship with His people. Ten of these have been since received into the Church. The names of the members were also looked over ; and it was concluded to admonish such as appeared indifferent towards spiritual things. Besides which, a weekly meeting of the pastor and deacons was suggested, for especial prayer and consultation in furtherance of the cause of Christ with us. These proposed efforts, were in some degree postponed by the immediate absence of the pastor three Lord's days, to meet engagements with distant Churches. On his return he learnt that the Rev. C. H. Roe, the secretary of the Baptist Home Missionary Society, was coming to preach in Portmahon chapel : the chapel of the second Baptist Church in Sheffield ; and to stay in the town a few days. We proposed to

the brethren there to unite with them in some special services during the stay of Mr. Roe, whom we knew to be a minister much concerned for the quickening of piety, and the increase of members in the Churches. The proposal was cheerfully agreed to; and we attended meetings for prayer, morning and evening, two or three days previous to the approaching Sunday. At these meetings there was much of the spirit of prayer; and the addresses of our brother Roe were listened to with great interest; and were accompanied with much power; particularly one on Setting our heart and soul to seek the Lord our God. On Sunday Mr. Roe preached; in the morning in Townhead chapel; in the evening at Portmahon, giving also in that chapel, in the afternoon, an address to the teachers and children of our respective Sunday schools. We closed our chapel for that evening, and both congregations assembled in the other place. It was full. The text was, "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone." The discourse was deeply impressive. At its close, I said publicly, "If any persons present, anxious for the possession of religion, were wishful to speak with us relative to that solicitude, the ministers present would be glad to meet them for that purpose in the school-room, at the close of the service." We expected some, but to our surprise and delight sixty persons came: many of them giving utterance to their emotions in bitter tears, the general enquiry being, in substance,

“What must we do to be saved?” and the prevailing fear, that of being left of God. The brethren Roe and Rees, with myself, assisted by our excellent deacons, conversed with these until they had all been spoken to; after which we took a record of their names as anxious enquirers, appointed a time for meeting them again during the week, and gave to the whole a general address, dismissing them with prayer. Thus this good work began to be manifested. We found, indeed, that a number of those who came to us had been awakened to religious concern before this time; but now they professed that concern. During three weeks at first, the two congregations continued to assemble together, morning and evening, daily; until, this being found inconvenient, it was amicably agreed that thenceforth each Church should labour for the continuance of the work apart. To its progress in connexion with our own place of worship, the remaining part of this narrative will principally refer. The spiritual improvement observable in many of the previous members of the Church is very pleasing. As to the general result of the whole, we may state that, including both congregations, two hundred persons have passed under notice as religious enquirers; and considerably more than half that number have been baptised on a profession of their faith in Christ. Into our own Church we have received, within about a year, one hundred and seven persons. Towards this

period the pastor was invited to be present at a tea-meeting of the members of the Church and congregation, to receive a token of esteem. It was a beautiful gold watch that cost fourteen pounds; having engraved upon the inner case an inscription, thus, "Presented by the junior members of Townhead street Church, Sheffield, to the Rev. C. Larom, 20th Nov., 1889, as a token of affectionate regard for his ministry, and to commemorate a revival of religion during the year." The gift was accompanied by the following address:

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—The younger members and friends connected with Townhead street Chapel, have long been anxious that you should possess some token of their affection and respect as a minister of Christ, and still more as their beloved pastor; but they are sensible, that in anything they can do, they will fall far short of expressing the deep obligations they are under for your self-denying and unwearied exertions; your affectionate counsels, and your fervent prayers. Yet they would beg your acceptance of the trifling present now offered as a testimony of their love and esteem. They wish to present it to you, not only as an acknowledgement of the debt of gratitude which they owe; but also as a memorial of a period during which the presence of God in this part of his vineyard has been manifested in a manner unparalleled in the history of our Church; and which, they doubt not, will awaken feelings of devout and humble gratitude to the Giver of all good; and be looked upon with delight and satisfaction in this world, and with complacency and thankfulness when time shall be no more.

It is to you they must still look for guidance and instruction in the path of duty as marked out in the word of God: and they, in return, hope that they may ever be supremely anxious that nothing either in their walk or conversation may in any measure disturb the mutual harmony which at present exists. They would also earnestly entreat a continued interest in your supplications at the throne of mercy, that they may be kept through grace unto the day of Jesus Christ; and that then, the subjects of this revival, together with you, and all who have been honoured instruments in the accomplishment of God's purposes may be presented faultless before Him who shall judge the world in righteousness; and that you and we may hear Him say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world."

A considerable portion of the pamphlet from which we have copied, tells how the news of this work of God reached the dissenting Churches of Hull, and occasioned the pastor's visit, by special invitation, to that town, and meetings of great interest and profit to be held there. But we must pass these things by in the pamphlet, and repeat only its closing words.

"In conclusion we would remark that our chief desire is for the continuance of God's presence. The descending of His grace has so refreshed us, that we wish it to be perpetuated with the same plenitude of blessing; and our prayer is, 'O, the hope of Israel, Thou art in the midst of us, and we are called by Thy

name ; leave us not.' Or, in the words of a hymn, written by a beloved friend, expressly for one of our meetings, we would say :

‘ Breathe, Spirit, breathe thy quickening powers,
And mould transgressors’ hearts anew ;
Revive thy Church with plenteous showers,
Revive it with thy precious due.

This hill of Zion bright adorn
With trophies of redeeming grace ;
Nor let it hence thine absence mourn,
Nor fail thy faithful love to trace.’ ”

THIRD DECADE.

The period on which we now enter was one of much trial, mingled with much by which it was counterbalanced. We record the causes of trouble first. They were principally two. One, the fact that we made no increase, through the whole of this period, in the number of our members. This was a regret, not so much to the members in general of the Church as to those more intimately acquainted with its affairs, and upon whom its responsibilities chiefly rested. This pause in our progress as to number, was not because we had no new members, for we had received into the Church, during the period we are writing of, one hundred and ninety-three : by baptism one hundred and thirty-one ; by letter from other Churches fifty-eight ; by restoration four. But many members were lost to us. This was occasioned, in part, by the coming to the second Baptist Church, of a new and popular minister ; and in part, by the defection of a number of those who became members during the revival ; and who, in many cases, notwithstanding

our prayerful and cautious solicitude to receive those only who were converted to God; seem to have made a profession without a renewed heart. Many, indeed, from that revival stood firm for God; but, alas! others failed. We lost by dismission forty-three; by withdrawment forty-seven; by exclusion fifty-nine. It was a relief and comfort to us, that with such heavy losses, our original number of members was kept up. Our second source of sorrow was the removal of thirty-one of our beloved members by death. Of these was Mr. Richard Atkinson, a very worthy man, who had been a member of the Church, and a deacon, thirty-six years. He had known the Church from the beginning; had adhered faithfully to it through all its early difficulties: by his fidelity in his deaconship he gained for himself high esteem, and died in the hope of the gospel on the 14th of May, 1842. Another of these departed ones was the beloved wife of the pastor. He may be excused in giving here the copy of a paper he then wrote respecting her, to be read by the Rev. William Landells, at the close of her funeral sermon, which was preached by him:

“The late Mrs. Harriet Larom was born in January, 1808. She died, therefore, in her thirty-ninth year. God’s general rule in bringing his people to himself obtained in her experience: she was converted while young. It is not surprising

that the conversion of His redeemed in their youth should be the general rule of His procedure. He has much for His Church to do on earth, and requires, therefore, its vigorous energies. It is, moreover, pleasing and honourable to Him to take the first fruits ; to have a youthful spirit consecrate itself to Him, a living sacrifice ; to see the best, not merely the dregs, of human life occupied in his service. Hence, though not always, yet generally, His people begin to love and serve Him in their youth. Such was the happiness of the deceased one, whose brief memoir we here give. She was baptized, on a profession of her faith in Christ, in her fifteenth year, in November, 1822. From her Christian profession, made thus, in the morning of her day, she never swerved, but by the care and grace of the great Shepherd and Bishop of souls, she was preserved ; and was enabled to give evidence of genuine piety to the close of life. At the commencement of her religious course, she left her vain associates, gave herself in the bloom of youthful beauty to the holy Saviour, and never afterwards, the writer is persuaded, looked back with longing upon any of the sinful gratifications of the world. Her religion was her solace and her joy ; its value was apparent to her enlightened understanding ; its beauty was pleasant to her spiritual taste ; its holiness the object of her desire ; the smallness of her attainments in it,

the source of her frequently-expressed regret. She wished to be an eminent Christian, and lamented her continued deficiencies. Yet divine grace endowed her with many excellencies. Our brief mention of them is with a view chiefly to the honour of that grace. In the conjugal relation, and especially as the wife of a minister, she was invaluable, wise in counsel, prudent in intercourse, and affectionate without weakness; she advised, encouraged, helped, according as the conditions of a Christian pastor's life required: and all with a cheerfulness of temper that was like the sunshine on the scenes of summer. She never disturbed the Church's peace, nor the peace, it is believed, of any member of the Church, by any unkindness or indiscretion. She was preserved from this, not by withholding herself from intercourse with the people; on the contrary, she loved the members, and delighted to associate with them in their religious worship, their book societies, their sewing meetings, their social circles; having piety and strength of mind, which prevented her from thinking it condescension to have friendly and Christian intercourse with even the poorest and feeblest of the flock. For the youthful members of the Church she cherished affectionate concern. She formerly united with them in the work of the Sunday school; she subsequently originated and presided over a juvenile Dorcas society, to aid in clothing the necessitous Sunday scholars; and during

a considerable time she managed an experience meeting of young females in the Church. One of these young friends, in a note written since her death, says "O! when I have listened to her sweet, calm voice, ascending to the throne of grace; and heard the expressions of the deep depravity of the human heart come from the lips of one who led so blameless a life, and heard her express the feeling of coldness in the cause of Christ, who was so zealous; I have been impressed with the humility of her mind, and at the same time with the beautifully simple, childlike confidence which she ever expressed in the all-sufficiency of Christ.'"

It may seem, perhaps, an exaggerated eulogy if we briefly speak of her excellence as a mother: yet she so acted in that dear relation, as to make her loss to her family very great. Clever in domestic management, and extraordinarily diligent in the occupation of her time, she was peculiarly fitted to make home happy, and to move through the many claims of a large family with comparative ease. It may be she overwrought herself. It was thought, by some, she did; but the motives in so doing were to be honoured. They were a concern to promote the comfort of her household, without being thereby burdensome to any, or bringing dishonour upon religion, by passing beyond her pecuniary means. Nor were the temporal interests of her children her only or chief

concern respecting them : she sought their spiritual good. She felt the responsibility of possessing a mother's influence ; and frequently gathered her children round her, particularly on Sunday afternoons, to read and explain to them the word of God ; and sow in their young minds the seeds of sacred truth, which she hoped would germinate within them unto life eternal. It was her happiness to see the two oldest become the disciples of the Saviour ; one of whom, her first-born, was removed a few months before her to the world above.

Her departure was unexpected, and sudden ; some time previously her health gave way, so as to excite a fear that her approaching confinement might have an unfavourable issue ; but the suspicion of that had been, in a great measure, dissipated by subsequent amendment. On the morning of her last day she took breakfast cheerfully with the family, and united as usual in family prayer. From that engagement at the domestic altar she went directly to her last conflict. It was severe. She kissed the babe that was born first, and was informed that she would presently embrace another, but to do so was beyond her power. On the birth of that second child she sank rapidly. She had no time to take leave of any : she felt that the waters of the river of Death were about her ; that she was then crossing the deep stream ; and, absorbed with the solemn thought of her own

nearness to the unseen world, she prayed earnestly for mercy, help, salvation, and expired. But she was safe. The mercy, the help, the salvation she sought in death, she had sought before. The God of salvation was her God. The bereavement brought by this dispensation upon the Church, the children, the husband, is very great ; but he, who must necessarily feel it most heavily, is persuaded that the whole of this very trying providence is right and even kind : that “ all the paths of the Lord are mercy and truth unto such as keep his covenant and his testimonies.” The Christian sympathy excited by this event, and variously expressed, is very great ; and has been viewed as one of the beautiful features of our holy religion. A minister at a distance, hearing of it, says, in a letter, “ The kindness of your people, (and he might have said, of others) in their concern for your babes, and the seasonable help they have given you, is fruit that will abound to their account ; and will be regarded by you as an odour of a sweet smell.”

The following lines, sent to the bereaved husband, by a friend who gives no name, will be a suitable conclusion to this account. To read them as though spoken by the departed one herself will give them an emphasis of special tenderness and force :

“ O, waste not a sigh on earth's perishing joys ;
 Regret not the scenes that are fading ;

For holier and purer the light that I see,
 A new world is opening its beauties to me,
 As this from my sight is receding.

Yet there are ties on earth, O, so tender and dear;
 And must not tears fall as they sever?
 O, no, though the knot may be loosened awhile;
 Yet the tears that are falling may flow with a smile,
 For heaven will dry them for ever.

Then waste not a sigh on this perishing world;
 It is heaven which is opening before me;
 And now that fair light grows more beauteous and clear,
 And now the celestial city is near,
 And now all around me is glory."

We have recorded heavy trials as marking this section of our history. Once or twice the pastor wrote secret memorandums of discouragement. Yet, through the whole, the Church's peace remained unbroken. The ministry of the divine word was not without success; the Sunday school continued to be worked by patient, zealous, and diligent teachers, who laboured not in vain; and the ordinances of Christian worship were sources of purification and comfort to sincere and humble waiters upon God. Nor did the Church withhold itself from pecuniary effort, but besides sending about fifty pounds annually to the Baptist Foreign Mission, with donations to other societies, and meeting the demands of its own expenditure, it contributed, in 1842, twelve pounds for soup for the poor; in the same year, one hundred and twenty pounds for painting and improving the

chapel ; in 1845, three hundred and twenty pounds, to clear off a debt upon it ; in 1846, fifty guineas as a present to their pastor for funeral expenses, besides putting up a marble tablet in the chapel, in memory of his deceased wife, at the cost of twenty-seven pounds ; and in 1849, one hundred and forty pounds for purchasing a piece of land adjoining the chapel yard, besides twenty pounds for the famishing Irish. Nor was the pastor otherwise than busily occupied through all this time. In addition to his regular duties, he formed in 1841, in his congregation, a Young Men's Book Society ; preached, in 1842, four discourses on Dissent ; in 1843, at the request of ministers and friends at Bradford, before whom the case had been laid, visited in Yorkshire and Lancashire to obtain money for relieving the pressure of the debt on Portmahon chapel, Sheffield. There were incidents in that journey the account of which will be interesting in itself, and also as giving to some a knowledge of what it is to travel with a chapel-begging case. The Townhead pastor had engaged to wait upon the chief friends in the Yorkshire Churches, but he had some knowledge of two Baptist gentlemen in a neighbouring county, who were distinguished by their wealth and liberality, and to whom he determined to present his appeal. He learnt, on his way, that the nearest railway station was a considerable distance from S——, the residence of one of these

friends ; but that an omnibus went from near the station to the place. The train stopped, and he was left with his luggage ; and on enquiring for the omnibus, was told that it went once a day only, starting early each morning ; whereas it was then afternoon. Pausing to consider what he had best do, he observed an innkeeper standing at his door, with his hands in his pockets. Going to him, he asked for how much he could be conveyed to S—— and back. The reply was, for a sovereign. He again paused to consider if it were wise to incur that expense, as the gentleman sought might be from home ; or, at home, might not think well to contribute to the case. While deliberating thus, the old adage occurred to his mind, “ nothing venture, nothing have.” He ordered the conveyance immediately, and reached the place about five o'clock. While the driver went with the carriage to an inn, he sought the house of the gentleman. It was a mansion in a park. On the opening of the door, the servant, in reply to the question, “ Is Mr. F. at home ?” said, “ No, Sir.” After a moment's hesitation, he asked, “ Is Mrs. F. at home ?” “ Yes, Sir,” she replied, “ please walk in.” He handed her his card, and was led into the drawing-room. The lady came at once, and surprised him by her polite friendliness ; asking him to join them at tea, which was then ready ; and saying her husband was expected shortly. To the reply that he had a man at the inn,

with a carriage, waiting to take him back, she said, "O, you must not return to-night. Go down after tea and dismiss the carriage; then, returning, take a bed here, and you will be sure to meet with my husband." So it was agreed. He found Mr. F. an amiable, a pious, and intelligent man. In the morning immediately after breakfast and prayer, he said, "Now, if you please, I'll look at your collecting book." He took it to a bay window, and wrote in it a donation. It was twenty pounds! He then said, "I am a man of business, and am obliged to go; but if you will stay and chat with the ladies, I will send my man with a carriage, who will convey you to the station, whence you will go direct to R——." Thanking him, and turning to Mrs. F., and her sister, who was then visiting her from London, they led the way into the study. He had scarcely reached it before he exclaimed, "Mrs. F.—is it possible!" "Is what possible?" she answered, "Did you not know us?" "No," he said, "not since I entered your house last night till this moment." The case was this: When at college, he had often supplied the vacant pulpit of a Baptist Church in M——, being received at the house of one of the deacons, who had three young daughters; he was much interested with these young ladies, and with their parents. On his departure from college his intercourse with the family ceased, only he had heard that it had suffered trouble,

especially in the very painful death of the beloved father ; and now, after more than twenty years, without seeking it, without expecting it, we had met again ! Mrs. F. was one of those daughters, her sister then visiting her was another, the third resided with her mother in the park. We all went down to see them ; and, after mutual surprises and pleasing recognitions, we kneeling, gave thanks to God for the goodness that had thus far brought us so happily on our way, and then commended each other to the same guidance in the future. The carriage promised was now waiting for him, and, taking leave of these dear friends, he reached first the station, and then, towards evening, the house of the second friend he wished to see. He found there another visitor, yet was himself received with great kindness, and it being Saturday, was urged and induced to remain with the family until Monday morning. On the way to chapel next morning, he met the minister, to whom he was well known, and who insisted on his preaching ; which he did, morning and evening. The text for the morning was the declaration concerning Moses, " He endured as seeing Him who is invisible," which sermon, he was afterward assured, was made by the divine blessing of special service to the gentleman visitor, influencing him to religious decision, and to his union with our denomination ; to which, and to the general Christian cause, his subse-

quent wealth and liberality rendered him eminently useful. The appeal of the collecting book on Monday to Mr. K., the honoured master of the mansion, was met by his donation of five pounds. The bearer of that book was glad, he was more than compensated for the self-denial of his journey ; he felt remarkable complacency in the old adage "nothing venture, nothing have ;" and was much gratified, on his return home, to present the sister Church at Portmahon, towards the removal of its debt, the sum of one hundred and seventy-six pounds.

In 1845 the Townhead pastor sent from the press a shilling book, entitled, "The Christian Urged to Usefulness ; an Address to the Churches of Christ," which was presently sold.

In 1846 he preached at the opening of a small place of worship for the use of our branch Church at Dronfield.

In May, 1847, he prepared and read the circular letter to the Yorkshire Baptist Association, the annual meeting being held that year at Leeds. Subject, "The Duties of Church Members to the Churches with which they are connected."

In June, 1847, he went to Edinburgh, as one of a deputation of two persons, from the Sheffield Branch of the Evangelical Alliance, to a large conference, convened to be held in that city in furtherance of the cause of Christian union in Scotland.

His colleague on that occasion was a very highly respected and excellent Wesleyan minister, the Rev. J. Hargreaves, then labouring in one of the Sheffield circuits, between whom and himself there was formed during the journey a friendship that has continued until now; the fruit of the fellowship of kindred minds. On reaching Edinburgh, we were invited to receive the hospitalities of the same house, that of Dr. Young, a physician of considerable appreciation in the city, the family consisting of himself, Mrs. Young, a daughter approaching womanhood, and a son just turned age; a young man of great promise, trained for his father's profession, and now practising with him; a successful writer, moreover, in several medical publications, but having a slight flush upon his cheek which made us fear his course would be short; and which we soon after learnt had indicated disease that blighted his earthly hopes, and removed him to a region where the skill of the physician is in no request, because never needed. In this dear and interesting family we found intelligence and piety so blended with a graceful ease of manners, and a warm and hearty welcome, that we soon felt ourselves free and happy as at home. The large meetings of the Alliance were all that could be wished: countenanced by all classes of Christ's followers, by many of the ministers of Edinburgh,

by numbers of its most distinguished people, and by holy and eminent men from localities far and near; and chiefly by the great presence of Jesus, whom they were all understood to trust in, adore, and serve. Our engagements at Edinburgh as delegates occasioned our staying over one Lord's Day, on which day many pulpits in the city and neighbourhood were occupied by Alliance brethren, who were requested by the respective ministers to take the service for them. The pastor of Townhead preached in the forenoon in one of the Edinburgh Churches; in the evening, in a Wesleyan Chapel at Leith, a large and populous seaport about a mile from the city; his text on each occasion being the words of the Apostle Paul, Gal. vi. c., 14 v.: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." On reaching the church in the forenoon, he found himself expected to put on gown and bands, habiliments he was not accustomed to use, though he had no conscientious objection to do so; but the cumber of them at this time was felt to be somewhat inconvenient, especially as he had to go for investing to a mansion ten minutes' walk from the Church, and to pass through the streets thus habited to the service. It was well, he thought, that no precise friend from Sheffield was

likely to meet him on the way. At the Wesleyan Chapel in the evening the gown and bands were in requisition again. The morning service was rendered particularly impressive, thus : At the close of the sermon, the minister of the church entered the pulpit, and in a solemn and touching address, expressive of sorrow and submission, gave to his people his own account of the decease of his beloved and honoured father-in-law, Dr. Chalmers. The death of that great and good minister of Christ, a few days before, was sudden and unexpected ; and mingled with our happier feelings a sacred sadness through all our meetings. The Evangelical Alliance was formed ten months before this time ; on the nineteenth of August, 1846, by a unanimous vote, in an assembly of near one thousand Christian brethren, of different denominations, gathered in London, by general invitation, from various parts of the world. Its objects being to increase brotherly love among the followers of Jesus, and to make it more apparent to those who were not connected with the Christian Church. Its formation was scarcely approved even by some good men : they never joined it ; they thought it unnecessary ; they feared it would not work ; they judged its object was not palpable enough. We reply not fully now to these objections. Let it suffice to say that the Alliance still exists ; that it has accomplished objects of great importance ; and that it proposed to

encourage and exhibit, not a mere notion, but a great fact ; notwithstanding the frequent imperfection of its manifestation, brotherly love does exist among the true disciples of Christ. That fact was demonstrated at Edinburgh. The warm welcome met with there ; the hospitalities given and received ; the friendships formed ; the prayers and praises presented by united hearts ; the papers read at the meetings ; the addresses given ; the surrender of pulpits on the Lord's Day to strangers, because they were accredited as those who were faithful to Christ ; the mutual regrets at parting ; the letters interchanged since ; the lively hope of reunion in " the city which hath foundations." In all these things it was seen and felt that they who were Christ's, did possess the great badge of Christianity : they did indeed love one another. The followers of Jesus should surely endeavour, in a manly way, to manifest this holy affection, in answer to the desire of their divine Master thus expressed : " That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in me, and I in Thee ; that they also may be one in us ; that the world may believe that Thou hast sent me."

Towards the close of the year the pastor preached at home a course of Sunday evening lectures, on " The Families of Holy Scripture." These were printed in a three shilling volume. The edition is exhausted.

The following are some of the notices of this book :—

“A very suitable book for Evening Family Reading.”
—*The Church*, June, 1852.

“Will be read with interest by Heads of Families.”—*Eclectic Review*, August, 1852.

“A subject of great practical importance. Cordial attachment to Evangelical Truth, and desire to write what would be useful, are perceptible in every part of the book.”
—*Baptist Magazine*.

“Mr. Larom has discoursed with devout intelligence. The volume teems with common sense observations, sound principles, and judicious counsels.”—*Christian Witness*.

“We heartily wish that every copy printed may speedily find its way into Christian families, and further editions of the work may be rapidly required.”—*Baptist Reporter*.

1848, preached one of the Association sermons at Scarborough, and the same year delivered an address at laying the foundation stone of the Baptist chapel, Barnsley.

In 1849, Mr. Francis Ebenezer Smith was chosen to be a deacon of the church, which office he still honourably sustains.

In 1850, Mr. William Stacey Chapman was called to the ministry by the unanimous vote of the church. He studied at Bradford and Edinburgh, and is now B.A.

In the same year, the pastor preached twice for the mission, in London; and gave the charge to the

church, at the ordination of Mr. Cathcart at Barnsley ; besides going, during this decade, five deputational journeys, in company with other brethren, for the Baptist Foreign Missions. The number of his sermons, from the beginning of his course, was now 4955. The places from home at which he preached during this decade were Wadsley, Hull, Burlington, Scarborough, Rotherham, Bradford, Bramley, Dronfield, Horsforth, Handsworth, Manchester, Lockwood, Wakefield, Lincoln, Waddington, Boston, Blackley, Salendine nook, Pole moor, Golcar, Driffield, Hunmanby, Bishop Burton, Beverley, Nottingham, Halifax, Rochdale, Leeds, Riddings, Hunslet, Hackney, Clapham, London, Swanwick, Attercliffe, Chesterfield, West Melton, Ramsgate, Edinburgh, Leith, Newcastle, Milnsbridge, and Woolwich. Our number of members, two hundred and fifty. Towards the commencement of this portion of our history, some of the more zealous and active members of the church, solicitous for the multitudes in the town who lived estranged from God, and in the neglect of religious worship, visited a poor neighbourhood called "Forty Row," for the purpose of distributing religious tracts among the people, preaching the gospel to them, and holding prayer meetings ; and finding that many of them could not read, they opened among them an adult Sunday school. The cottage in the row, used for these purposes, was occupied by a healthy

young couple, a man and his wife, neither of whom could read, nor did they perceive the necessity or worth of Christianity. The husband did not at first like the meetings in his house, and often absented himself from them : the wife remained to witness them : but they were both desirous of learning to read. He soon acquired the ability. His wife was more slow to learn ; but upon her mind the religious services she attended at the meetings in her house began to tell powerfully ; she became anxious, penitent, believing. At length, on a profession of her faith in Christ, she was baptised and received into the Church. Some time after this her husband, who had learned to read, and to whom a New Testament had been given, foolishly supposing, perhaps, as many working men then did, that there was nothing wrong in violating the game laws, was apprehended on a charge of poaching, and committed to prison for a month. The grieved and pious wife secretly determined, so far as opportunity might allow, to occupy the whole of that month in special, earnest prayer for the conversion of her husband. The month soon passed, and he came home. On entering his house his wife welcomed him by saying, " Oh, my lad, I am glad to see thee." He replied, " Ah, my lass, and I hope thou seest me a new man." Surprised and joyous, she asked him what he meant. " I am hungry," he answered, " and wearied with my

walk from Wakefield. Bring me something to eat, and I will tell you." She did so, and he then gave her this account,—“ When I reached the prison I was permitted to work at my trade ; but I felt degraded and miserable, and an appalling temptation fell heavily upon me. It was that of self-destruction ; and my shoemaker's knife laid before me. Whilst goaded with these thoughts of my wretchedness and of suicide, I took from my jacket pocket, scarcely knowing why, the New Testament I had given me, and opening it my eyes rested on the words of Jesus, ‘ Let not your heart be troubled ; ye believe in God, believe also in me.’ The effect of those words upon me was remarkable. The temptation was gone ; my strength also seemed to have departed ; I felt weak as a little child. I sat down upon my iron bedstead and wept ; I kneeled and prayed ; I sought the Lord, and he heard me ; yes, I believe he has heard ; and so I hope I have come back to you a new man !”

Their mutual adoring gratitude to God in this season of emotion, their mingled tears of joy on account of the great mercy they had sought and found, we describe not, because we did not witness them. They were not intended to be seen of men ; they were sacred to secrecy, and to Him who sees in secret. Some time after this, the husband was baptised and received to our fellowship. These two beloved friends have now been members of the Church five and

twenty years, giving continued evidence of genuine conversion to God, and seeing several of their dear children the professed disciples of the holy Saviour.

Nor were these the only happy results of our visits to Forty row. There were others, of which we may mention the case of two aged persons, named Sandby, who were encouraged to trust in Christ, and to join themselves to the Church ; and who both died at length rejoicing in the Redeemer, whom but for these efforts they probably had never known ; the wife in her last hours abounding in thanksgiving for " the divine mercy that had saved her," she said, " in her old age, after a long life of forgetfulness of God."

These cases are recorded as strikingly illustrating the value of humble and well directed Christian effort ; and the power of believing earnest prayer : and with intense desire that the Townhead street Baptist Church may continue, in some such methods, to labour for the guilty and perishing on every hand around her.

FOURTH DECADE.

This was perhaps the most prosperous section hitherto of the Church's history. Its reminiscence reminds us of words in the hundred and second Psalm, "Thou shalt arise and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea the set time is come; For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof." The Church was stirred up, during this period, to do special work, and to exercise a more than ordinary liberality. Considerable alterations and improvements were made in our Chapel, which was then repainted: an organ was built for us, and put up; the schoolroom was painted; classrooms and an organ gallery built above it; altogether at the cost of eight hundred pounds. No painful difference of opinion in the Church is remembered as to the use of instrumental music in religious worship. The general view seems to have been that we ought to serve God with our best: that good singing aided devotional feeling; and that as the wise and moderate use of an organ contributed

to good singing, it could not be otherwise than of use, particularly as giving force and order to the service of praise, and as a suitable accompaniment to the divinely required homage and melody of the heart. Nor has it been found, in this Church's history, otherwise than therefore to be approved. Our singing has moreover, through many years, been happily led, for the most part, by members of the Church, under the superintendence of Mr. Atkinson, to whom the Church is much indebted for his lengthened, steady, and gratuitous attention to the conducting this part of religious worship. The erection of class rooms was found to be of great service to our Sunday school ; giving opportunity for quieter instruction, for calmer thought, for more direct appeal to the children's minds, and for the prayers of the teacher with the class.

These things being finished, the Chapel was reopened on the Twelfth of January, 1851, when Mr. Baynes, of Nottingham, preached in the morning and evening. On the Thirteenth Mr. Raleigh preached ; and on the Fourteenth we had a large tea meeting. After this a bazaar was opened in our schoolrooms, which brought three hundred and seventy-eight pounds. The articles for sale were given by our own friends chiefly ; and by others who kindly contributed : and consisted of ornamental needlework, children's clothing, cutlery, and other articles of

Sheffield manufacture. The pecuniary result of the whole—the collections, subscriptions, tea meeting, and bazaar met the entire cost of the improvements, except one hundred and fifty pounds; which sum was afterwards raised, and the whole amount paid.

In February, 1851, two highly respectable persons, who, both the husband and the wife, had been hitherto connected with the Established Church, called upon the pastor to say that they had long been dissatisfied with that connexion; had been made unhappy by the discovery and conviction that in its constitution, as governed by the State and in other respects, the Established Church of England failed to be in agreement with the New Testament. That they, themselves, were now dissenters and Baptists; having been recently baptized by Dr. Octavius Winslow, whilst on a visit at the city in which he ministered; that they desired a pew in our Chapel, fellowship with us as a Christian Church, and union with us in Christian effort. Their application was laid before a Church meeting. Having views similar to our own, and giving evidence of true discipleship to Christ, and of concern to take the truth humbly from His lips, to hold it with a loving powerful grasp, and in His strength to follow wherever it may lead, they were affectionately welcomed and received to membership with us.

In July, 1852, by voluntary contributions in the

Church and congregation, originated by themselves, the sum of seventy-three pounds was presented to the pastor, as a token of Christian love, and to make up for the smallness of his salary.

In September, 1853, a few friends presented him with fifteen pounds with which to go to Scarboro' for relief and health.

In April, 1854, his salary, which had never been more than one hundred and fifty pounds, was increased to one hundred and eighty pounds per annum.

In May, 1859, his young ladies' bible class asked his acceptance of a pair of gold spectacles, which he has used to the present day.

In the same year a noble effort was made in aid of funds for the erection of the Baptist College, Rawdon, near Leeds, which was built at a cost of twelve thousand pounds, and is now paid for. Joseph Wilson, Esq., gave one thousand pounds. Others of our friends together contributed two hundred and forty-five pounds, making twelve hundred and forty-five pounds from our own congregation, besides which the pastor presented to the college a large-sized and faithfully photographed coloured likeness of Dr. Steadman, in his vigorous days ; who was the first beloved and honoured president of the Institution, which was now removed to the new college, from Bradford.

We have thus grouped these pecuniary memories, thinking it best to dispose of them together. We now return in our dates to mention some previous facts.

In May, 1852, the Church suffered considerable loss in the lamented death of Mr. Ebenezer Smith. He was a man of intelligent and decided godliness, exemplary in his domestic relationships, firm in his religious convictions as a Dissenter and a Baptist, taking a deep interest in the affairs of the kingdom of God in general, loving Christians of all denominations, and especially concerned for the Church to which he belonged ; in which he diligently served as one of the deacons through sixteen years ; caring for the poor of the flock, visiting the sick, aiding the pastor thus, and also by his counsel, prayers, and his regular and devout attendance on the services of religious worship. Through a considerable portion of his deaconship he was the secretary of the church. He lived to see almost all his children the avowed disciples of the Saviour. He closed his life on earth, sustained by the great hope of the Gospel, and departed, we believe, to enter the blissful presence of his Redeemer.

In September, 1852, the honourable and rev. Baptist William Noel, preached in our chapel for the mission. The collection, sixty-three pounds.

In December, 1852, Mr. Joseph Wilson was

appointed to the office of deacon. In March, 1854, we opened a small chapel at Dronfield, which we had built for the use of our branch Church in that village. In the same year the Yorkshire Association of Baptist Churches held with us its annual meetings, which are recorded to have been very interesting and happy. In November, 1854, the Church celebrated its jubilee, this being the fiftieth year of its existence. As the fiftieth year among the Jews, called their jubilee, was a year of much joyful interest to them, mortgaged estates being then liberated, debts cancelled, and enslaved persons all set free: so our jubilee year was one of grateful happy interest to us. The review of the past history of the Church was not all cheering; there had been seasons of discouragement. At one time the pastor wrote, "We have had great losses by death and other causes; Oh, Lord advance Thy work." Yet, the retrospect of the whole demanded exulting thanksgiving. During these fifty years many had been brought into the Church whose sins had been cancelled by the precious blood of the great sacrifice of Jesus: many who had been delivered from the slavery of iniquity, into the glorious liberty of the children of God: Heaven's great blessing on the Church's efforts in the pulpit, the Sunday school and elsewhere, had caused those efforts not to have been in vain. Numbers moreover of our loved members had been released from all

earth's trials and imperfections to the freedom of Heaven's expansive and enduring satisfactions. All those had departed by whom, fifty years back, the Church was formed. Not one was left. And many more were gone in like manner : but others had been gathered, still to sustain the Church, to keep up, and increase its number of members ; to perpetuate its efforts ; to receive benefit from its fellowship ; and to glory in its divine Lord. It celebrated therefore its jubilee : by two sermons from the pastor on the Sunday ; by a special meeting on the Monday evening ; and on the Wednesday evening, by a jubilee tea meeting. The text for the sermon on Sunday morning, 2 Phil., 18 verse, " For the same cause also do ye joy and rejoice with me : " that for the evening, lxi. c. Isaiah, 1-2 v., " The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me ; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek : He hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted ; to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound ; to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord."

About this time painful events in the second Baptist church, Portmahon, Sheffield, occasioned the withdrawment of a number of its members. These presently applied to be received to membership with us. On careful examination it was found that their secession was justifiable : that they could

not, with comfort, return to their previous position at Portmahon : nor be persuaded, as we desired, to constitute themselves into another church, and open a place for preaching and religious worship, with a view to greater usefulness, and the enlargement of the Baptist denomination in the town. This being thought by them impracticable ; they were affectionately received to our fellowship. Two of these friends, Mr. John Charles and Mr. William Charles, were some time after this appointed to office, and so added to the number of our deacons. This office they continued to fill until their lamented removal from us by death. These two brethren had, by the blessing of Providence, on a lengthened course of clever, honourable, and diligent attention to business, raised themselves to the possession of considerable wealth ; and had sought along with this to aid the great work of the Gospel in the world ; and to promote the prosperity of the two churches in the town with which they were, at different times connected : showing thus the possibility of a compliance with the Apostolic injunction, " Not slothful in business ; fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." Their solicitude for the welfare of the general cause of God and truth was constantly apparent ; and their conscientious attachment to our own denomination was ever unquestionable. Mr. William Charles departed from this life on the eighth of October, 1862 ;

and Mr. John Charles on the fourteenth of January, 1866. Others of these beloved members have also been taken from us : a few still remain to share in our Christian regard, and to mingle with us in Christian worship and service.

In May, 1856, the pastor went to a village in a neighbouring county, to preach for the Sunday school of a Baptist Church ; on which occasion the value of his dissenting principles was brought impressively before his mind, in a way which may not improperly be stated here. As Baptists, we dissent from the Established Church on other accounts, but chiefly on these two. In that Church infants are sprinkled, and that sprinkling is called baptism, and it is solemnly declared that that baptism regenerates their souls : a pernicious mistake with which we dare not connect ourselves. Then that Church, by its union with the State, finds its government in the hands of worldly men ; State governments being composed principally of such ; so that the world governs the Church, and that in even its most important affairs. The appointment of many of its ministers being in the hands of statesmen who frequently, to serve their own worldly ends, put very unworthy men into its most responsible positions. Besides which, Church livings being many of them in the gift of less distinguished, though equally irreligious persons, and being regularly put up for sale, men in every way unfitted

may, by favour or money, occupy the pulpits of this Church. This has been often done, and may in the present constitution of things be often done again; but not without the danger of its being followed by disastrous results to the souls of men. The writer himself knows a town of considerable size and importance, whose vicar, years ago, was the patron of the theatre, and who was succeeded in his office as vicar by a young man who had no gifts for the Christian ministry, nor any godliness, and who by his gay caprices brought upon himself general contempt. After some years, divine mercy brought him to repentance and to Christ: from which time he did his best for the spiritual benefit of his parish. The townspeople escaped thus from the evil influence of his early worldliness, and learned at length to respect the man whom they had previously despised. The facts which have occasioned these recollections we now state. Having reached the village on the Saturday evening, the writer was received to the hospitalities of a Christian gentleman of high character, whom he had long known. Enquiring in the course of conversation as to the state of religion in the place, he learnt that its vicar had held that office there forty years. He appeared to have had neither piety towards God nor integrity to men. He would drink at any public-house at which he might put up a score; get into debt with any who would trust

him, without any apparent care as to repayment ; and that he had recently been convicted before a magistrate of an attempt to defraud the gentleman himself, who, without acrimony, but with a grieved spirit, gave this account. The next morning the writer had no engagement, the chapel being reserved on that day for service in the afternoon and evening ; he therefore went to church, being desirous to see this clergyman, and the state of things under his charge. Service had commenced. Opening the door, and stepping into a pew next at hand, he found it a large square pew that might not have been occupied or cleaned for years. It was covered with dust, so as to prevent sitting down. The clerk, seeing his position, came out of his desk, round the aisle, and beckoning led him to a seat near his own, from which he had a view of the whole congregation ; but, alas, the congregation had been almost entirely driven away by the immorality of the minister. It numbered then sixteen adults, and about as many children : notwithstanding that the church was of good size, and the village a considerable one in extent and respectability. A few children were placed with two violin players in a side gallery, to lead the singing and chant the reponses. Sad, indeed, it was to hear those little children and those little fiddles squeak and scream to the solemn words, " Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts

to keep this law." The vicar was in the pulpit; a fine old man, with a good natured, rubicund face. When he turned to the lesson for the day, it was the twenty-third chapter of Matthew, beginning thus, "The Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: all therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works, for they say and do not." It was observed to see if the reading brought a blush upon his face: if he trembled at the fearful woes pronounced in that chapter upon characters so similar to his own. He neither blushed nor trembled; but read through the lesson with a countenance that seemed to express complacency with it all. The curate preached a short sermon, with an utterance so defective that the meaning of many sentences could not be gathered.

The writer left the Church, ashamed that the religion of the glorious Saviour should be thus dishonoured; grieved that a man so totally unfit should dare to minister in His sacred name. O! he thought, where are the seals to this ministry of forty years: the souls that shall be for a hope, a joy, a crown of rejoicing, in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming. He felt that while he loved all holy men in the Established Church; and rejoiced in all the good they did in it, notwithstanding its unscriptural constitution; cases such as this; and others he had known, and which necessarily spring from

its alliance with the world; not only justified, but demanded his dissent.

On the third of May the pastor went with a company of ministers to dine at Redmires, to breathe the moorland air, and to see the reservoirs of the Sheffield Water Company. While there, one of the party, pointing out to us a number of dilapidated cottages, near the largest reservoir, told us the place was now called "blazes;" but that that was a contraction of a terrible name given to it by the navvies or workmen for whose accommodation the cottages were built, whilst they excavated the great water basin now in use. The name they gave to the place was "Hell blazes." Whether they applied that name because of the smallness, and consequent heat of their apartments in summer, or from some other cause we know not: but it is recorded as furnishing an indication of the rugged and daring wickedness of this laborious and useful class of men, whose lives are in frequent peril, and for whose instruction and salvation comparatively little seems hitherto to have been done. Yet the Church's instrumentality can reach them; and the Church's Lord can save them. Surely then they should not be left to live and die amongst us, without having Christ preached to them, and without being warned and encouraged to flee to Him from the wrath to come.

In October, 1858, there appeared in our night

sky a very large and splendid comet, near the constellation Ursa Major; an event not indeed necessarily connected with the history of our Church, except that all the members gazed at it, we suppose, and wondered: some of them viewing it as a production of that blessed Being, marvellous in creating power; who was notwithstanding very near to them in loving covenant favour, as their Father and their God. Properly indeed might they look with astonishment at this object: for who can clearly comprehend the nature, mention the age, describe the wanderings, or declare the purpose of the existence of so mysterious a visitant? Was it gathering round its nucleus and condensing matter for the construction, a myriad ages hence, of a new world in which the Eternal One shall reveal his glory to new created and intelligent beings, to whom He shall give it as their home? Or was it a mere stupendous mass of mist, to be drawn into, and absorbed by the great heat of the sun, at some too near approach to that ardent orb: or shall it travel on until scattered and dissipated in the immensity of space—a wandering star for whom is reserved “the blackness of darkness for ever?” It was a beautiful object in our evening sky. Its head or nucleus was bright and probably opaque; from which its after part stretched out in straight lines, widening a little as they went: and in appearance to the unassisted eye, about ten yards long: whereas

astronomers declared it to be, from their scientific calculations, forty millions of miles in length. One evening the star Arcturus was distinctly visible through the tail: even high up towards the nucleus: showing, either that the tail was composed of thin vapoury matter: or, as some have thought, that there was, near the head, a division of the trailing substance, leaving an aperture, through which so bright a star could easily be seen: both which views are probably correct.

How can we better close this short notice than by repeating words from heaven's own anthem, saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty."

In October, 1859, we held our annual tea meeting of the Church and Congregation: a meeting designed to promote harmony of holy intercourse amongst the members; and to subserve their spiritual benefit. Mr. Samuel Chapman, junior, a son of one of our highly respected deacons, being with us, a presentation was made to him of "Kitto's Encyclopedia," on his departure to Edinburgh, to study for the Christian ministry. He is now the highly esteemed pastor of the Baptist Church, West street, Rochdale.

In November, 1859, the Rev. C. H. Spurgeon, the most popular minister living, preached for our mission, in Nether Chapel, lent us for the occasion;

the large Chapel crowded: numbers unable to get in. Amount of collections, sixty-two pounds.

In the same year, Mr. F. A. Charles, one of our young members, went to Rawdon College to study. He is now pastor of the Baptist Church, Pepper street, New Basford, Nottinghamshire.

In 1860, Mr. William Page, a young member, left us for Regent's Park College, London, where he became B.A. He is now settled as pastor of the Baptist Church, Truro, Cornwall.

In May, 1856, the Townhead pastor closed his honorary secretaryship of the Yorkshire Baptist Association, which he had held four years. He spoke at the ordination of the Rev. J. Ashmead, on his settlement with the Baptist Church, Rotherham; and in June, 1858, he gave an address at the settlement of the Rev. F. Britcliffe over the Church at Doncaster. In his own pulpit, on Sunday evenings, he gave, in 1852, nine lectures to shew the claims of Christianity on the acceptance of the working classes. In 1857, six lectures on the Prophet Elijah. In 1859, ten lectures on the eminent and holy men of the Old Testament. In 1860, twelve lectures on the Scripture titles of Jesus Christ. On other evenings, and in various places, he lectured four times "On the origin and growth of Popery;" repeated five times a lecture on "The Life and Poetry of James Montgomery;" gave six times an anti-

slavery lecture, entitled "Uncle Tom's Cabin;" one lecture on the divine origin of Holy Scripture; and he brought through the press a little work of sixty-two pages, with the title "He is risen," of which work the reviewers spoke thus: "Written in the author's accustomed style, with much clearness and practicalness, and with faultless orthodoxy." "Written wisely and well. In this little book many of the most important truths of revelation are ably deduced from this great fact of gospel history, and many of the most important duties of a Christian life are enforced by an appeal to the lessons it teaches."

In addition to home engagements, he preached during this decade at Nottingham, Rotherham, Loscoe, Dronfield, Barnsley, London, Braintree, Scarborough, Burlington, Masbro', Manchester, Salford, Blackpool, Huddersfield, Newcastle, South Shields, Doncaster, Halifax, Battersea, Bradford, Sutton, Hull, Attercliffe, London, Kensington, Brearley.

His number of sermons preached reached now six thousand and ninety-six. The number of Church members, two hundred and ninety-eight.

CLOSING SECTION.

Before proceeding to detail successive facts in our remaining history, we would say a few words on the constitution and management of the Church itself. In respect of these things, as also of the doctrines taught amongst us, we continued to take the word of God as our only certain guide. Mere human opinion or authority in such matters, however ancient, or plausible, or highly valued, being of comparatively little account with us. The writings even of the Fathers, as they are called, we found to be diminished in value by mistakes and conceits, and not reaching the excellence we expected to find in them. Yet this occasioned us little regret and less inconvenience, since in Christ's own word we had all the direction we needed. Persons new to the Christian life we received to membership with us, on their credible profession of heart-sorrow for sin, and of hope for forgiveness and salvation exclusively from the great redeeming work of Christ. Such persons, their life being answerable to their profes-

sion, were baptised by immersion in water, in the sacred names of the Holy Trinity; a solemn service, involving in each case a self-consecration to God, and in which the great facts of the Saviour's mediation, and of their own religious experience, were figuratively and strikingly expressed.—Rom. vi. 1-5.

Any member of the Church charged with iniquity, and found, after due admonition, to be still living in sin, was at a Church meeting, and by the suffrages of the members, excluded, so as to be no more a member of the Church, unless afterwards restored on evidence of repentance, and return to the paths of righteousness.

The Church communed in taking the Lord's supper, on the afternoon of the first Lord's day in each month; admiring the beautiful simplicity, and the powerful sanctifying suggestiveness of the ordinance, as delivered to the Church by its divine Lord, with the godlike tenderness of the words, "This is my body, broken for you—my blood, shed for you. This do in remembrance of me." Oh! then, when hearts were melting, and eyes were starting tears, and self-consecrations were being renewed, and disciples were trying to look into the depths of their great Saviour's love; then to have brought a censer, and filled the place with odour, to represent Christ's preciousness—if that were, indeed, its intention; to have lighted a number of candles, to signify that He

was the light of the world—if that were its purpose ; would have been felt to be a very vanity, an intrusive impertinence, an insult to the spiritual taste, as useless as to scent the rose, and as ridiculous as to attempt with the light of a taper to increase the splendour of the noon-day's summer sun. Could we reach the ears of those Protestants who are practising these things, or leaning towards them, we would say in words indicative of what we deem to be the cause of this, " Oh, brethren, put from you with shame these Popish toys, pray for the higher spiritual life, seek earnestly that the Holy Spirit may take the things of Christ and reveal them to you, that so you may be relieved from the desire of these poor alternatives : and ponder seriously how it is that of all the sections of Protestant Christianity, yours is the only one in which the tendency to these sinful puerilities is found."

It always appeared to us desirable that the disciples of Christ should, as far as circumstances might permit, have their minds informed : that intelligence and piety should unite and aid each other in their experience : that while the sacred volume should be their great study, having daily converse with it, they should read other books to enlarge their minds ; and to help their contemplation of that. With a view to this we had a number of small book societies, adapted to the different classes of our people. These

societies met, each separately, once a quarter to tea, to pay a small subscription towards the purchase of new books ; and for the private sale, at the time, of such volumes as had passed, for reading, through all their hands. New books proposed for the society were voted for, or against, under the advice and guidance of the pastor. Once a year these societies assembled all together to tea and mutual recognition ; at which times essays were read which gave evidence of varied ability, and showed that the books introduced had not been perused in vain. In this we stood at the opposite point to popery, in its shameful opposition to the spread of knowledge ; and especially its daring and wicked interdiction from the people, of the book of God.

Our Sunday schools we valued much. There were three. The chief one at Townhead ; and one at each of our two village stations. They were made to us a continued blessing. The children of many of our members, and many children of others were there enabled to read the divine word, and were instructed in the things of God. Not a few of them so learned as to understand and love the truth ; and so came into the fold of the divine Shepherd who “ gathers the lambs with his arm, and carries them in his bosom ; ” and were consequently received as members of our Church ; while others of these, removed by an early death, passed to the heavenly pastures,

where the same Great Shepherd feeds his flock, and leads it to living fountains. One such, a fine boy of about thirteen years, said recently, when dying of fever, "Mother, put after my name, upon my tombstone, 'died in the faith of Jesus.'" Young disciples who became teachers found in the school service an answer to the question, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" Here the reply was patent: "Feed my lambs." Other teachers who had entered the school without religion, came there so near to it, that in many cases their hearts were smitten, and they "gave their own selves unto the Lord." While others, in this labour among little ones, had their abilities so tested and manifested, that they passed from the Sunday school to the pulpit, halting only by the way, to have some years of collegiate training for the pastoral work. Many names of living teachers, who have laboured long and faithfully, might have honourable mention here, were we not fearful of trespassing upon sacred feeling, and publishing what was never done, that it might be seen of men. Let it suffice then to name three only, Mr. Wheatley, Mr. Atkinson, and Mr. Sissons. The two first mentioned were of the five by whom the school at Townhead was commenced, and their hearts have deep interest in its welfare still. They have both rendered to it a life-long service; having besides, through many years, met the duties and responsibilities of deacons

in the Church. Mr. Sissons joined them afterwards in their school work ; and was found to have special ability for it. He has bound his name about many an infant and youthful heart : has aided the religious services of Sunday schools by writing many original and beautiful hymns : and in token of the general appreciation of his worth he has been called to the honourable position of president of the Sheffield Sunday School Union.

We have spoken of sending young men into the Christian ministry. This was never lightly done ; but with much serious concern that they had a true and earnest piety ; and special gifts for study and public speaking ; with motives suited to the solemn work, and which should be approved of Christ. Such requisites being believed to be possessed ; then these young brethren were recommended to one of our ten colleges, in which, under tutors of distinguished ability and godliness, they might be further fitted for the future service of the Saviour.

We proceed now in the order of our history. This section of it opened with the marriage of the pastor after a widowerhood of fourteen years. He was united to a widow lady, of Nottingham, who had been some years a member of the Independent Church assembling in Castlegate chapel, in that town. The marriage was solemnized on the 7th of February, 1861, in the above-named chapel, by the Rev. C

Clemance, the minister of the place, assisted by the Rev. James Edwards, pastor of the Baptist Church in George street. This event proved a propitious one to all concerned. It was approved by the members of the Church, in whose respectful and affectionate regards the pastor's wife soon found a happy place. She saw at length that it was the duty and privilege of Christ's followers to be baptized in his name; she therefore gave herself to that ordinance, and was received to the full membership of our Church. From that time she has willingly endeavoured to serve it, so as to promote its welfare. Indeed the time of this marriage was a time, not of joy only, but of gratitude, which was far indeed from meeting fully the divine claims upon us, very far; yet there was a mutual desire to meet them, so far as our poor ability would admit: we have a written memorial of self-consecration which we will not transcribe here: an earnest solicitude expressed for more usefulness in the service of the Church's great Lord: all which may account, in part, for the efforts we are about to mention, and which the history we are writing requires us to record. The pastor had, as aforetime, to preach twice each Lord's day, sermons that required and obtained three days of close and heavy mental labour, weekly; and once a month to administer the Lord's supper on Sunday afternoon: on Monday to preside at a prayer meeting; an hour before

that meeting he met a young ladies' bible class; and after the prayer meeting he met a young men's improvement class: generally holding moreover a meeting for religious inquirers, in the vestry, at the close of each Sunday evening service, and preaching to his own people every Thursday evening, besides paying among them about four hundred visits yearly; and meeting numerous public religious engagements in the town. In 1861 he gave, in his own pulpit, a course of Sunday evening discourses on the miracles of Christ. In 1862 a course on "The Pilgrim's Progress." In 1863 a course on Bunyan's "Holy War;" and also a course of sermons entitled "Life Sketches from the Biography of the Old Testament." During our present period he repeated five times, in as many places, a lecture called "The Sower in the Sunday School;" twice, his lecture on "Montgomery;" once, that on "The Causes of the Corruption of of Christianity;" and gave five lectures on different subjects to his young men's class. He attended moreover, annually, the examiners' committee meetings of Rawdon College. In October, 1861, he preached at the opening of Chesterfield Town's Hall, for Baptist worship, and formed twenty-two persons into a church. In 1862 he spoke at Barnsley, at the settlement of the Rev. J. Compston. Gave an address on the laying the foundation stone of the Baptist Chapel, Chesterfield, by Joseph Wilson,

Esq., and at a similar service for a Baptist Chapel at Whittington, by William Sissons, Esq. In 1863 preached three sermons at the opening of the Chesterfield Chapel: twice, at the opening of our new Chapel at Whittington: twice, in London, for the Baptist Mission; presided at a tea meeting in Rotherham, for the presentation of a bible and fifteen pounds to the Rev. J. Ashmead, on his resignation of the pastorate of the Baptist Church: and introduced the service at the ordination of Mr. Gledstone as minister of Queen street Chapel. In 1864 spoke at the recognition of the Rev. H. Quick, as pastor of the Church in Nether Chapel: preached to the Church at the ordination of the Rev. J. Arnold, Rotherham; took part in the ordination of Mr. Newsholme, Independent minister of the Tabernacle: and spoke at the settlement of the Rev. W. B. Birtt with the Church at Chesterfield: held a tea meeting of the young people of his bible and improvement classes, at which seventy persons were present; and preached during this period at Attercliffe, Rotherham, Whittington, Dronfield, Chesterfield, York, Newark, Sutton, Nottingham, London, Llandudno, Hebden Bridge, Doncaster, Southport, Barnsley, Masham.

The efforts of the church were answerable to those of the pastor; furnishing, in either case, no ground for boasting; but giving, we humbly hope,

evidence of some amount of spiritual life. A number of friends worked steadily on in our Sunday schools, not without success. Others, carried, in religious tracts, words of life to the houses of the people. Brethren who were able, went to preach the truth to our branch churches, and elsewhere. About this time, 1868, a few of our ladies originated a mothers' meeting. This is held every Monday afternoon, from two until four o'clock, in our schoolroom: at which time a number of poor women assemble, to whom secular advice and help are given, accompanied with religious instruction, admonition, and prayer. The ladies provide themselves with a stock of material suitable for underclothing, from which they sell to the women, at a small reduction of price, quantities proper for garments. These the mothers themselves make up while sitting at the meetings; and pay for in small sums weekly, as they can afford. When the whole is paid the garment is taken home. The number of mothers whose names are on the books is sixty. They listen with great attention, while sewing, to what is read or spoken to them, and are drawn to the meetings very much by what they there hear. We have besides two Dorcas meetings which meet at given times, for providing new clothing for the poor. Our new chapel at Whittington cost six hundred pounds, the greater part of which has been paid by our own friends. To the Baptist chapel

opened about the same time at Chesterfield they gave liberal sums, besides providing for their bazaar a Sheffield stall, which itself realized sixty-three pounds. In 1862 great distress prevailed in Lancashire, in consequence of the American war depriving the people of cotton, the material of the Lancashire manufacture. Half a million of persons were said to be out of work. We had collections for their relief fund which amounted to thirty-four pounds; and many of our people contributed also liberally to the amount raised generally in the town for this object. In 1863, two hundred pounds were subscribed by our congregation for repairing and repainting the chapel and schoolrooms. In October, 1864, a tremendous calamity, near at hand, made another appeal to the benevolence of our people, and others. The Bradfield reservoir, on an eminence, from which the town is supplied with water, burst in the night of the eleventh. The water rushed with terrific force, eight miles down the Loxley valley to Sheffield, taking Neepsend, Spring street, Wicker, to the valley of the Don; leaving all the way a vast wreck; a widespread desolation: occasioning immense destruction of property; and the loss of about three hundred lives. Whole families were swept completely away, goods and houses and all. Many perished in sleep: and many others just awoke to die. Great sums of money were

collected to relieve surviving sufferers ; numbers being reduced to utter destitution. Our congregation nobly joined with others in meeting this appeal.

All these various efforts may seem to some to be considerable : we do not mention them that they may seem so : we are thankful they were made : but they dwindle into littleness before the question which any disciple of the Saviour, might properly put to the Church, or to any individual member of it, " How much owest thou unto my Lord ?"

In 1868, one of our young men, Abraham Birtles Camm, was recommended to Rawdon College, for training for the Christian ministry, and was received.

The first marriage in our chapel was solemnized in October, 1828 ; the last within the limit of this history, in November, 1868.

In July, 1865, the pastor preached a sermon on the deacon's office, Mr. Benjamin Dixon and Mr. Sydney Smith having been appointed thereto.

1865.—The number of members received into the Church from its beginning down to this date was one thousand, one hundred, and seventy.

Our proposed narrative now approaches to its close. Towards the end of the year 1865, the pastor's health, hitherto remarkably firm, broke down ; his nervous power flagged. The symptoms, though not severe, were admonitory. The physician, Dr. Thompson, charged him to diminish his accustomed

labours. He could not do that and fulfil his pastoral charge. He saw it was best, therefore, to resign it ; which, with reluctance, yet with submission, he did. His friends desired a public meeting for leave-taking, and for presenting a testimonial. Such meeting was held in the Temperance Hall, on the 7th of March, 1866. The meeting was large and influential. The ministers present were the Rev. J. H. James, Dr. Stacey, Dr. Evans, of Scarborough ; the Revs. David Loxton, H. Quick, Brewin Grant, J. P. Campbell, Dr. Falding, J. Flather, J. Newsholme, Giles Hester, C. Tyte, J. P. Gledstone, H. Tarrant, R. Stainton, besides many gentlemen and ladies, the representatives of the different Christian denominations in the town. Many, if not all the ministers spoke, and some others, words of great kindness and respect, which wholly to transcribe would not be deemed desirable ; the report of the meeting, in the *Sheffield Independent*, occupying near three columns. With the best of our judgment, we make the following selection.

The Rev. David Loxton, the chairman, introduced the business by a short and beautiful address ; after which Mr. William Atkinson, one of the senior deacons, made the presentation. He said, " My dear Sir, I have been requested to undertake the duty, and I have much pleasure in doing so, of offering to you this testimonial, subscribed for by

the members of your own church and congregation, as an expression of their esteem and love ; aided also by kind contributions from sympathising friends of every Christian denomination in the town, and of others in different parts of the kingdom. It would be improper for me to take up much time, especially favoured as we are with so many ministerial and other friends, who, doubtless, will be anxious to testify their respect for you as a Christian minister. Nevertheless, a few remarks will be expected from me. At such a time, one cannot but look back on the past. It may not be known to all present that you were sent to college by our own Church ; and that at the close of your college course, the pulpit being then vacant, you were, by a unanimous vote, invited to become the pastor of the Church. I well remember with what diffidence and trembling anxiety you acceded to our wishes, fearful as to whether you would be equal to the grave responsibilities which the step involved. By the way, Sir, there is a solemn fact, which should be a lesson to some of us ; it is, that you, and I, and three others, are the only remains of the Church which invited you to the pastorate. It has been my happiness to be united with you through the whole of your ministerial career ; and therefore to know something of the difficulties and anxieties through which you have passed, especially in the earlier years of your

ministry. When you came among us we had a debt upon our chapel of more than twelve hundred pounds, the whole of which has long since been paid; and almost as much more expended in the improvement of the chapel, and the erection of our schools and class-rooms. Your course has not been all sunshine. You have had trials to endure, difficulties to surmount, great principles to contend for, which might have damped the zeal or unstrung the energies of one less persevering and devoted. The neighbouring towns and villages have also been benefited by your labours. At your suggestion, and mainly through the efforts of yourself and friends, chapels for our own denomination have been built at Rotherham, Barnsley, Dronfield, New Whittington, and Chesterfield. We have now a Church of near three hundred members, chiefly the fruits of your ministry, besides many others located in different parts of the kingdom and the world, and many who are gathered to the glorified Church above. During your pastorate, seven young men have been sent into the Christian ministry, several of whom now occupy important and influential positions in the Christian Church. In this brief address it would be impossible to enter into the details of your labours among us; but I may say, you have manifested the most affectionate solicitude for the welfare of the young people connected with us; and by the instructions of the Bible-class, by

introducing them to the Sunday school, by engaging them in intellectual and benevolent labour, you have sought to enlist their sympathies in that which is good. You have also shown kind consideration for the poor of Christ's flock. The afflicted and bereaved have been comforted by your sympathy and prayers; and in the highest aim of the Christian ministry, the preaching of the everlasting gospel, you have endeavoured to instruct the ignorant, to arouse the careless, to rebuke the scoffer, to awaken the impenitent, to direct the enquirer, to reclaim the backslider, to strengthen the weak, to encourage the believer, and to sum up all in the emphatic words of Scripture, you 'have not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God.' Nor in this brief summary should we omit to mention your consistent Christian life. Not all who preach the gospel live the gospel; but you retire into comparative private life with a reputation unspotted and blameless. And now, dear Sir, allow me to express my sincere wish, in which I am sure I shall give utterance to the desire of all your friends, both here and elsewhere, that after forty-five years of labour in your beloved work, you may, in the bosom of your family, enjoy health and happiness, and that you may be long spared to render occasional service in your great Master's cause; that, as in the past, so in the future, His blessing may be with you, and His presence attend you; and that seed sown by

you, but which may have long lain dormant, may rise up a plenteous harvest, to the praise of Him whose you are and whom you serve ; and when, in a ripe old age, you are called to exchange worlds, you may be able to adopt the exultant language of the Apostle, and say, ‘I have fought a good fight ; I have finished my course ; I have kept the faith ; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me in that day.’ ”

The presentation was now made, with the following address, printed on white satin :—

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—Forty-five years ago, you were called by this Church to the office from which you this day publicly retire. Most of those who invited you have gone to their eternal rest ; but we, their successors, who for many years have had the benefit of your ministry and pastoral oversight, regard it both as a duty and a pleasure to state to you on this occasion the feelings with which we contemplate your work. In addressing you on this subject, we remember that he that judgeth you is the Lord ; and that human praise or blame is of comparatively small moment with you ; but, at the same time, we feel that an expression of the sentiments of those to whom you have so long ministered cannot be ungrateful to you.

It is with much joy and thankfulness to God we this day declare that you have been to us a good minister of the Lord Jesus Christ. You have been to us a kind and diligent pastor, watching for our souls as one that must give account. You have faithfully preached to us the great

truths of the Gospel, and declared unto us the whole counsel of God. The long period of your pastorate has been one of great peace and happiness. Many of us are indebted to you under God for the greatest good man can confer upon his fellow-man. You have been God's instrument in bringing us out of darkness into marvellous light, and producing in our hearts the hope of a blessed immortality. We shall ever cherish towards you feelings of the profoundest gratitude and reverence. It is a satisfaction to us to know that the feelings with which we regard you are extensively shared by the ministers and members of other churches in this town.

As a token of our affection and gratitude, we beg your acceptance of the sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds, and a tea and coffee service, towards all which a considerable amount has been subscribed by members of other denominations. While bidding you farewell as our pastor, we still hope you will be long spared to us as a dear and valued friend; and that our God and Father, who has sustained and guided you through the trials and struggles of youth and manhood, will, during the remaining years of your life, abundantly bestow upon you the comfort of his presence, and the hope of eternal blessedness.

Signed on behalf of the Church, by the Deacons,

JOHN WHEATLEY,
WILLIAM ATKINSON,
SAMUEL CHAPMAN,

FRANCIS EBENEZER SMITH,
SIDNEY SMITH,
BENJAMIN DIXON.

The presentation being thus made, the Rev. B. Evans, D.D., of Scarborough, and Professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Baptist College, Bury, Lancashire, said, although he had an intense interest

in his young ministerial brethren : he looked upon Mr. Larom with feelings altogether peculiar. He admired the self-consecration of the former, but the latter as he was retiring from a long and honoured pastorate, reposing, as it were, on his laurels, he could not help regarding with some degree of reverence ; and a desire to sit at his feet, as a dear and valued friend. Forty-two years ago he made his acquaintance, and ever since he had esteemed Mr. Larom with increasing affection, and had looked up to him as a counsellor. The longer he had known him, the more had he valued him : from a deeper consciousness of his great moral worth ; a reputation never sullied ; and a character which any might devoutly imitate. He knew no minister in the country more respected by the brotherhood of ministers ; more esteemed by the Baptist Churches, and none whose retirement from official duties will be more regretted. During his life he had had to do with four testimonials : but never with so much pleasure as with this one. Many to whom he had written, communicating the intention of the Church, had replied to him, that it would be a disgrace to the body if one whose character was so lovely, and whose ministry had been so able, should be permitted to retire without adequate means of entire comfort. He rejoiced in the testimonial because a portion of it would be handed down to posterity, gathering around

it many intensely interesting associations. He hardly knew whether was the most to be lauded: the Church which had invited an untried man, and one of its own members to become the pastor; or the pastor who has retained the confidence of the Church so long and so entirely. He believed that no such testimonial had been made to any minister of the denomination; and he counted it all honour to the Church that it had done so nobly. He expressed his gratitude to the Rev. D. Loxton and the Rev. B. Grant, for their aiding in this business.

The Rev. C. Larom being called upon to reply, spoke as follows:—Mr. Chairman and Dear Friends, —There is an emotion of mind which no intelligent creature would despise or reject, unless he were found among the sinning and ruined angels; or amongst the proud and self-sufficient of the children of men. Such a one might deem it humiliating and unmanly; but that it is entirely the reverse of either is evident in the fact that it is loved and cherished by all the truly excellent on earth, and by all the exalted and redeemed in heaven. That emotion is gratitude; a pleasant virtue, which adds to the joy for benefits received, the feeling of affectionate benevolence towards the individuals bestowing them. You will not be surprised to learn that that emotion now governs in my heart; and that I desire to give expression to it, to those dear friends present, and to others

they represent ; whose respectful kindness has brought us here to-night : and, above all, to that supremely great and glorious One whose past beneficence lays upon us all a claim to the highest gratitude for evermore. I would first present my thanks for that part of this very liberal testimonial presented by my long esteemed friend and valued brother, Dr. Evans, and which, as far as it has gone, may be regarded as in some sort denominational. Not by parental training, but by other means, I was brought, in early life, among the Baptists. I was struck with the position they then occupied in the van of the great missionary work : and with the thought that they on whose record of membership were found the names of Bunyan, Milton, Robert Hall, John Foster, Olinthus Gregory, Carey, Marshman, Ward, were surely the people of a denomination not to be despised. Besides which, among them, I was led to know and accept the Saviour. I was bound to these people on that account : and the more so as I increasingly perceived their great concern, in the constitution of their Churches, the appointment of their ministers, in their doctrines, ordinances, worship, and discipline, to be guided, not by expediency, nor human wisdom, nor wordly influence or authority, but solely by the teaching of the unerring word of God. I have endeavoured from the first, so far as able, to serve the Christian body to which I belong, and have

received continued marks of its esteem and love ; but that any part of this present testimonial should have had at all a denominational aspect was what I had not expected, nor, until told of it, had ever thought. There is another portion of this testimonial quite as unlooked for by me as the first mentioned one. I mean that part of it conveyed to me by the kindness of my beloved brethren, the Rev. David Loxton, and the Rev. Brewin Grant ; which I understand to have been contributed by Christians of every denomination in the town. It is true indeed that though firmly, because conscientiously, a Baptist, I have never been a bigot. While loving my own denomination ; I have affectionately regarded others. With Christians of every section of the Saviour's Church in Sheffield, I have ever stood on terms of friendship. I have preached in many of their pulpits : spoken on their platforms ; sat in their committees ; communed in their tea meetings ; interchanged with them services. I take no credit to myself for this ; I looked upon them as the disciples of Christ : I viewed them as trusting in and loving Him ; boasting in His cross, and throne ; and knowing that they did homage to the divine Redeemer ; that they stood around that central glory ; I was even fain to stand lovingly among them. Their part in this testimonial is peculiarly gratifying to me : because I value highly the esteem of the good : and

because the world may see in this case that true followers of Jesus, though diverse in some religious opinions and practices; are in the fundamentals of of their sacred and common Christianity, essentially one.

The remainder of this testimonial: that presented by the people of my charge, I value most of all: not merely because it is the largest in amount: or because part of it consists of so beautiful a specimen of utility and taste: but because I know it to be a token of their love. We have communed, and worshipped and laboured together in the gospel many years. Our communings are as pleasant now as at the first: our mutual worship as sacred and refreshing: our labours for Christ have not been in vain. Even briefly to indicate those labours, and their success is unnecessary, as they have been in part referred to by a previous speaker. It may be added that by almost daily effort through years of study, I have built upon the foundation laid at college a somewhat accurate and intimate knowledge of the Hebrew and Greek, in which languages the holy scriptures were first given to men: and by careful reading, which was ever a delight to me, have gathered a tolerably extensive acquaintance with the sacred and the general literature of the present and past. The two sister Baptist Churches in the town emanated from us. Our contributions

to the Baptist Foreign Mission have averaged for some years from sixty to seventy pounds annually, while other excellent objects have received from us considerable support. But let it be far from any to think that I make these statements boastingly. Ah, I have other thoughts than those of pride. We have not accomplished what we hoped; we have not effected what we might have done. Yet grieving over the defects of which we would be humbly conscious, we would not otherwise than rejoice that we have not laboured in vain. I am thankful that I leave the Church in peace and love, and in a position very favourable for considerable enlargement and advance, by the divine blessing on vigorous, wise, and holy effort. It is moreover pleasing that though resigning the pastorate, I am not putting off the harness; that though no longer a commander in the Christian army, I am still a soldier; the banner of the Captain of salvation as dear to me as ever: and my solicitude as strong that the army of the cross may gain increasing victories in the strenuous effort to smite down evil and the evil one, and rescue multitudes, who rejoicing in their deliverance by the gospel shall be found worshipping at their Redeemer's feet. Relief from pastoral duty, and from incessant study has already restored my health. I can still preach the reconciling word; and be able in other ways to serve the

cause of God and truth. Such service I shall be happy to render as a helper occasionally to the ministers of Christ: as aiding to promote the religious interests of the town; of the Church of which I am still a member; and the denomination to which I belong. And now, dear friends, allow me to express once more, my thanks for all the varied and valuable manifestations of your kindness and esteem: and to ask you to unite with me in grateful and adoring homage to God who has so graciously conducted me thus far, and to whom the honour of whatever good has resulted from my life entirely belongs. To Him be all the glory for evermore.

Our history closes here. We add only a few gratulatory lines. We congratulate the Townhead Church on the possession of a fourth pastor; in the person of the Rev. Charles Short, A.M., whose ability, acquirements, amiableness of disposition, and experience as a Christian minister, give cheering promise of subsequent success. And we give joy to the Church on account of the effort for God on which it has entered: an effort long thought of, but begun now: that of building a second place of worship, with the purpose of raising up a congregation, and gathering a Christian church in each place: in the central chapel in Townhead street, and in the subur-

ban church on Glossop road ; a noble effort worthy of any Christian people. The writer's heart is in the entire scheme : and will on its accomplishment be with each people : and these will be his words to the church in each place, " Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, peace be within thee."

